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MODERN TRENDS IN TAFSIR LITERATURE—MIRACLES



BY

PROFESSOR DR. BASHIR AHMAD SIDDIQI
(M.A., Ph. D.)



FACULTY OF ISLAMIC AND ORIENTAL LEARNING
University of the Punjab, Lahore
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“BOTH KORAN AND TRADITION PROCLAIM THE REALITY OF MIRACLES AND EXTRAORDINARY ACTS WROUGHT BY SAINTS. TO DENY THIS IS TO DENY THE AUTHORITY OF THE SACRED TEXTS”

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*(Al-Hujwiri, Kashfal-Mahjoob,
Eng. Trans., p. 230).*

contents

FOREWORD	iii
Preface	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER	
I THE QURANIC CONCEPT OF MIRACLES	7
The objections of the Orientalists against the word mujiza and its answer	8
Nature and Function of Miracle	13
Purpose and motive of miracle	17
Orthodox interpretation of the miracles mentioned in the Holy Quran	22
<i>Notes and References</i>	63
II MIRACLES OF PROPHETS MENTIONED IN THE QURAN	
Miracles of Moses	83
Miracles of various Prophets	97
Miracles of Jesus	120
Miracles of the Holy Prophet (P. B. U. H.)	125
<i>Notes and References</i>	131
III OPINIONS OF MUSLIM THEOLOGIANS AND MUTAKALLIMIN AND MUSLIM PHILOSOPHERS REGARDING MIRACLES	137
Miracles a manifestation of the Power of God	145
Difference between Mujiza and Karamat	150
Difference between Miracle and Sorcery	152

Purpose and motive of miracles	161
Harmonization between Philosophy and Religion	172
<i>Notes and References</i>	176
IV MODERN TRENDS IN TAFSIR LITERATURE AND THEIR CAUSES	185
Deism of the 18th Century	196
Kantian Science of Nature	202
Dawn of Historical Criticism	208
Scientific Interpretation of Nature and History	216
Propriety of Miracles	221
Probability of Miracles	224
The Reinterpretation of miracles	231
<i>Notes and References</i>	236
V IMPACT OF MODERN WESTERN THOUGHT AND SCIENCE ON MUSLIM RELIGIOUS THOUGHT	
Their Influence on the Interpretation of the Quran, especially with regards to Miracles	245
<i>Notes and References</i>	267
IV DISTINCTION BETWEEN ORTHODOX AND MODERNIST INTERPRETATIONS OF THE QURAN AND MIRACLES	
Modern Exposition and attempts at Distortion of Quranic Teachings with Examples	273
Conclusion	301
<i>Notes and References</i>	305
BIBLIOGRAPHY	

Foreword

Dr. Bashir Ahmad Siddiqi deserves high commendation for his learned discussion on the intellectual and scientific interpretations of the phenomena of miracles. Although the book under review was a research thesis for the award of Ph.D., yet the book is a remarkable contribution to the learning of Islam. Dr. Siddiqi is a learned scholar with subtle and deeply inquiring mind, enjoying a spectacular authority over the ancient and modern knowledge. His scholarly vision is glaringly evident : the way he painstakingly explores the knee deep subtleties and complications of a topic like 'miracles'. He has judiciously kept in mind the modern mode of a research work in compiling this book. He has studied as a scholar the whole range of the objections raised before replying with the wand of logic that obliterates the whims. The book consists of six chapters. Each chapter is in itself ripe with fresh information and knowledge.

On the publication of this book, not only Dr. Siddiqi deserves a hearty congratulation but also the University of the Punjab as it will be a commendable addition to the classics produced by the University.

(Prof. Dr. Zulfaqar Ali Malik)

Preface

I find no words to thank the Lord Almighty for his kindness and blessings to enable me to complete my thesis for doctoral degree from the University of the Punjab in the field of Islamic Studies.

The topic was "Modern Trends in Tafsir Literature-Miracles". This was the first research work in the field which was submitted to the University of the Punjab in June 1971. The research was mainly motivated from the teachings and personality of the greatest Educator of humanity—The Holy Prophet (PBUH) who kindled the light of knowledge and guided the Muslim Ummah to move on the right path for service to humanity at large.

Miracle is a reality which is accepted both in Semetic and non-Semetic religions. Under the influence of renaissance the heart of religion was damaged and there developed a conflict between Science and Religion which interfered with reality and concept of miracle as a unitary complex.

Under the impact of European Civilization, the modernists started interpreting Quranic concept of miracle in negative terms. It happened generally in the Muslim world and more specifically in the subcontinent. This research work not only presents true Quranic concept of miracle but also narrates opinions of eminent Muslim Philosophers and Theologians in this respect. Their accredited view points have been fully cited.

A critical analysis of influences of Rationalism in Europe has also been included in the present research work. A comprehensive effort has been made to develop it from original sources.

I am most grateful to Prof. Dr. Rafiq Ahmad, the learned Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Punjab, for his approval to print the research work. I also thank Prof. Dr. Syed Mohammad Akram Shah, Dean Faculty of Islamic Learning of the University of the Punjab, for his sincere cooperation, failing which the thesis would not have seen the light of the day in printed shape.

My heartiest compliments are due to Prof. Dr. Zulfaqar Ali Malik, Vice-Chancellor, Islamia University, Bhawalpur, for contributing "Foreword". I am highly grateful to Prof. Iftikhar Ahmad, Deptt. of English, P.U., to give precious suggestions on matter relating to language. In the end, I pray to Allah that my humble work may be beneficial to readers.

Dr. Bashir Ahmad Siddiqi

September 1, 1988.

Chapter I

THE QURANIC CONCEPT OF MIRACLES—RELEVANT
VERSES—THEIR INTERPRETATION BY OTHODOX
MUSLIM SCHOLARS—AHADITH REGARDING MIRACLES
ESP., MIRACLES OF THE HOLY PROPHET (P.B.U.H).

Chapter I

THE OCEANIC ORIGIN OF MICE
VESSES - THEIR IMPROVEMENT BY THE
MUSEUM SCHOLARS - A HISTORY OF RESEARCH
AND THE PROGRESS OF THE SCIENCE

INTRODUCTION

The subject under investigation is "Modern Trends in Tafsir Literature with special reference to Miracles". But before we deal with the subject, it is essential to point out what the problem is, how it arises and what is the adequate method of solving it.

The subject is treated with reference to the Holy Quran, and to the efforts made from time to time towards the interpretation of the concept of miracles in the light of the spirit of the relevant age and its attitude towards knowledge. The changes in the interpretation of the concept derive from a fundamental dichotomy between religion and knowledge.

These two qualitatively distinct values essentially differ from each other. Religion in its essence consists in the relation of a specific nature called "Ubudiyyat" that exists between man and God, whereas knowledge is synthetic judgement a priori. The basic distinction between Religion and knowledge is that Religion in this sense is once for all perfect and is not subject to development while knowledge is in the process of growth and does admit of progress. The value that is not subject to development is pure and simple while the value that admits of development is continually growing from simple to complex and from complex to more and more complex in the process of its growth. Knowledge is the value which is subject to growth and is continually passing from simplicity to greater and greater complexity.

Further, the distinction that lies between Religion and knowledge is that the source of Religion is Revelation which is sheer grace, and the expression of the Divine will to compensate the inherent limitations of sense into the avenue of human knowledge, whereas knowledge acquired through sense, experience and Reason suffers from the inherent limitations of man because of which transcendental reality remains beyond the reach of man. In short Revelation is a gift which comes through divine grace and knowledge is acquired by effort.

But in spite of the fact that the two values, Religion and Knowledge, fundamentally distinct from each other, are not incoherent and incompatible provided we do not ignore the fact that the development of knowledge is not linear and that knowledge may appear to be incompatible at one stage of its development or the other, if we fail to realize that the development of knowledge takes place on the basis of dialectical principles and that the process involved in the dialectics of

growth involves the law of opposition. At the dogmatic i.e. pre-critical stages of the development of knowledge namely dogmatism and scepticism, knowledge may come to conflict with miracles which is the object of faith in Religion. For example, at the stage of dogmatism, Reason insists on the discovery of the causal nexus and may tend to deny miracles, the cause of which is not determinable, as has been the case with the Mutazilites. While at the stage of scepticism which is the stage of unbounded disbelief in the competence of Reason—Knowledge insists on making empirical alone as real. As the case is with those who are under the impact of modern empiricism that refuses to acknowledge anything to be truth that does not admit of empirical verification.

In this way the trends of the Quranic exegesis pass through three stages :

- (i) the rationalistic stage according to which theoretical reason is the standard of validity.
- (ii) the Orthodox attitude that consists in holding Revelation as the source of guidance and thus "Sama" (hearing) on the part of the believers is the avenue of the knowledge because their reception of knowledge takes place through hearing the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.). This is why priority is given to "Sama" over "Basr" as the avenue of the knowledge.
- (iii) the Empiristic or the so-called "Scientific" stage that appears as a result of the impact of the dominant alien western culture and our political subservience, at which the trend of denial of miracle develops because experience as the avenue of knowledge of reality alone is acceptable and miracle does not admit of empirical verification by an ordinary man.

The evolution of the concept has passed through the following phases :

According to Christianity Religion and Knowledge are inherently incompatible because Religion is faith, faith is dogma, and religious dogma insists on unity of trinity whereas knowledge does not and cannot accept it. Therefore, so long as the superiority and priority of Religion over knowledge remained unquestionable in the Western world the question of the denial of miracles did not arise. But when knowledge gained upperhand and the philosophers and the scientist felt to have gained power over Religion, the tenets of faith were subjected to the test of knowledge and were rejected on the ground that they were incompatible with knowledge. Since the Empirical attitude dominated in the West the philosophers and the scientists refused to accept anything as truth that did not have its source in

experience. Not knowing that the problem of Religion is distinct from that of science and philosophy and that knowledge (scientific or philosophical) and Religion have their respective limits of validity, the sceptics like David Hume raised doubts about the miracles. The Church in Europe was also inclined to interpret the miracles in a way that they could be explained.

When our education, society, economic struggle and the political thinking were secularized as a means to the consolidation of foreign rule in our country and efforts were made to disseminate the systems of knowledge, orientated to preserve the colonial interests and deprive us of the type of the individuals that could think of the revival of our past glory, we too, developed tendency to deny miracles as a fact. The result was that ever since we drank deep at the fountains of Western knowledge orientated to preserve the colonial interests, we un-knowingly and uncritically accepted the point of view given to us by modern education and developed the attitude that knowledge is only that which is evolved in the West. We began to deviate from our own ideological base and accepted the trends of denial of miracles in the exegesis of the Holy Quran.

Now that we have regained our independence it is our duty to outgrow the state of intellectual subservience and try to undo the forces of disintegration in our religious and cultural life. Therefore, it is time to examine the modern trends in the exegesis of the Quran regarding 'miracles' and trace the phenomenon of deviation from the orthodox point of view.

There can be no doubt that one who believes in the prophetic doctrine about Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, can find no a priori difficulty about verifying the miracles of the prophets.

There is no gainsaying that a modern man who is exclusively absorbed in the so-called scientific conception of nature as the scene of inevitable law, might shun the idea of any intrusion into it of any thing 'from beyond' or the idea of any interruption of its regular law or order. But for the Muslim, there is nothing irrational in miracles, because he does not look upon the universe as a closed system, complete in itself and subsisting independently of its Maker. The Islamic idea of belief in God is that the Ever-living and Potent Lord is always concerned with the affairs of the universe, and is always moulding and remoulding it according to His will. There is no doubt, a uniformity in nature which has shaped it to a regular system and an order, but it does not mean that Islam treats the universe as a finished product, existing outside the orbit of Lord's care and activities, having no effective relationship with Him.

Such a view is repugnant to the spirit of Islam. The uniformity in nature signifies the perfect orderliness of God. But the principle of order of nature should not be taken in the sense of blind mechanism. It denotes perfect reason, and perfectly free will of the Supreme God, the Creator.

The idea of moral freedom is not in itself antagonistic to the idea of a perfect Law. If nature is to be animated by freedom, and not by a blind necessity, then there is nothing unreasonable in miracles because in the heart of this world of determinate and determined forces and laws there lies this mysterious and unique thing—the free will of the Creator which the modern scientists have failed to comprehend.

Science is not the only legitimate avenue of Reality. There is also a moral avenue to Reality which justifies the existence of miracle. It is not contrary to reason to expect from the Almighty God, that under exceptional circumstances, He should show some special signs which might attract the attention of the people quite effectively.

It is true that the testing of faith lies in enduring and seeing Him Who is invisible in the ordinary course of life when the hearts of men almost fail to perceive the real worth of the teachings of the Prophets, it is quite logical if they are revived with the forces of some extraordinary event. The miracles are thus a part of a redemptive process which seeks the restoration of the Divine and moral order in nature and not its overthrow. These are the occasional expressions of God's will and special purpose in the universe in connection with His Prophets which are designed to serve as eye-openers to the people steeped in ignorance and heedlessness. When a miracle is performed the natural order is disturbed with a view to awakening the spiritual and moral consciousness of man.

Miracles, it must be remembered, are very rare. That is of their essence. These are occurrences in the process of nature that the experienced order cannot account for, and which constrain man to recognize a special or extraordinary action of God, calling attention to a special purpose.

This concept of miracles is very exhaustive. It tells us that these are not common occurrences, but are quite rare. Secondly, it tells us that they are astounding events. Lastly, that although they are performed by prophets, they are actually performed at the behest of God.

This is the sum and substance of miracles in Islam.

Hence the sequence of discussion in this investigation is as follows :

Chapter I posits the Quranic concept of Miracles ; objection of the orientalists

on the word "Mujiza" and its answer ; nature and function of miracles ; purpose and motive of miracles ; and special characteristics of Quranic concept of miracle. The Orthodox interpretation of some popular miracles mentioned in the Quran has been given to show that right from the 1st century Hegira till today Orthodox point of view of miracle has remained in vogue.

Chapter II states all those Quranic verses which are concerned with miracles, to prove that the denial of miracles is the denial of such a big portion of the Holy Quran, and that the miracles are inseparable from the Holy Quran.

Chapter III contains the opinions of great Muslim scholars like Abū Ḥanīfa, Ash'ari, Baqillāni, Ibn Ḥazm, Ghazzāli, Syed Ali al-Hujwari, Fakhr al-Rāzi, al-Nasafi, al-'Iji, Taftazāni, Ibn Taimiyya, Ibn Qayyim, Sheikh Ahmad Sarhandi and Shah Waliullah, regarding the various aspects of the issue of miracles. The views of celebrated Muslim philosophers like Fārābi, Ibn Sīna, Ibn Miskawaih, Ibn Maimoon, Ibn Ṭufail and especially Ibn Rushd are also cited and it is proved that all of them believed in the credibility of miracles.

Chapter IV describes the impact of scientific knowledge and Religion, and the victory of knowledge over dogmatic Religion in the West, and its direct influence on the issue of Miracle (i.e. its refutation) has been shown. Deism of 18th century, Kantian science of nature, dawn of historical criticism, scientific interpretation of Nature and history and reinterpretation of miracles to reconcile with the refutation advanced by the so-called scientists has been discussed in this chapter.

Chapter V traces the impact of modern western thought and sciences on Muslim religious thought and its influence on the reinterpretation of the Quran with special reference to miracles mentioned in it and evaluates the attempts and interpretations made by various Mufassirin in the light of modern thought. Various examples of distorted interpretation of the Holy Quran by them have been cited.

Chapter VI examines the distinction between the Orthodox and Modernist interpretation of the Quranic miracles. Examples of their attempts at distortion of Quranic exegesis have been given and an attempt is made at assessment and evaluation of orthodox teachings with regard to miracles. The chapter headed "Conclusion" brings out that the exponents of modern thought out of the craze of modernity in Quranic exegesis have distorted the truth and have deviated from the Orthodox stand simply for their inability to differentiate between the requirements of Religion and knowledge.

The Quranic Concept of Miracles

Miracle is so vast a subject that it requires volumes to be discussed in detail. If, on the one hand, Spinoza and David Hume, being hostile critics of miracles, insisted on their incredibility, on the other hand, much has been written in its defence by numerous writers to prove its possibility and its being in accord with the laws of nature.¹ This is probably because of the fact that the Bible is full of accounts of miracles.² Very little attention has been paid to the Islamic concept of miracles. The article on "MUJIZA" in the Encyclopaedia of Islam is even less than half a page. Even that brief article is a misrepresentation of the Islamic concept of miracles.

DEFINITION OF MIRACLES ACCORDING TO NON-MUSLIMS

The word "miracle" is derived through French from Latin "Miraculum"³ meaning literally, "a thing to be wondered at"⁴, "something wonderful"⁵, "a departure from the usual course of nature"⁶, or "any thing wonderful beyond human power and deviating from the common action of nature"⁷. Many define miracle as "a purely natural fact which specially arouses sentiments of piety"⁸. Some opine miracle to be "the supernatural interference with the ordinary course of nature for a definite religious or moral purpose"⁹. The most precise and concise definition of miracle is "miracle is a sign or event which shows the power of God".¹⁰

DEFINITION OF MU'JIZA

The general word used to denote miracle in Islamic theology is "Mu'jiza". The word mu'jiza is derived from "ajz" (عجز). According to al-Rāghib al-Isfahāni it literally means as follows :

” و العجز اصله التاخر عن الشئى و حصوله عند عجز الامراى مؤخره و صار فى التعرف
اسماً للقصور عن فعل الشئى ”¹¹

In the Holy Quran the word is used in its original meaning :

“He said, Woe me : do I lack the strength that I should be like this crow and cover the dead body of my brother”¹².

The word "ajaza" means to weaken, to disable ; the Holy Quran says :

“And know that you cannot weaken Allah”¹³.

“And you cannot escape in the earth”¹⁴.

Thus the word "Mujiza" originally means anything which incapacitates¹⁵.

Taftāzani defines "mujiza" as follows :

"A thing deviating from the usual course of things, as a challenge to those who deny this, of such a nature that it makes it impossible for them to produce the like of it. It is Allah's testimony to the sincerity of his prophets"¹⁶.

A more comprehensive and technical definition of "mujiza" appears in *عمدة عقيدة اهل السنة والجماعة* by Abul-Barakāt al-Nasafi, a book which explains almost all the fundamental doctrines of Islamic theology, as under :

"المعجزة وهي ظهور امر الهى خارق للعادة فى دارالكيف لاطهار صدق مدعى النبوة"¹⁷.

A similar definition is given in al-Iji's "al-Mawākif", a comprehensive study of the formularies of Islamic faith and according to Wensink¹⁸, "a complete and systematic description of the subject". He defines "mu'jiza" as :

"المعجزة وهي بحسب الاصطلاح عندنا عبارة عن ما قصد به اظهار الصدق من ادعى انه رسول الله"¹⁹.

THE OBJECTIONS OF THE ORIENTALISTS AGAINST THE WORD MUJIZA AND ITS ANSWER

There have been raised some serious objections by the Orientalists about the word "mujiza" : "It (the word mujiza) does not occur in the Koran, which denies miracles in connection with Muhammad, whereas it emphasises his "signs" 'ayat' i.e. verses of Koran. Even in later literature Muhammad's Chief miracle is the Koran Miracles of Apostles and Prophets, esp. those of Muhammad, occur in the Sira and hadith. Yet in this literature the term "mujiza" is still lacking as it is in the oldest forms of the creed. The Fiqh Akbar mentions the ayat of the prophets and the Karamat of the saints. Mujiza occurs in the catechism of the Abu Hafs Umar al-Nasafi"²⁰.

The above mentioned objections are based on two main reasons :

1. The orientalists study Islamic Literature with a bias and prejudice ; its glimpses may be frequently observed in their writings on Islam and the prophet of Islam.
2. They lack a thorough knowledge of Islam and Arabic Literature.

If one seriously analyses these objections, one would find them quite baseless :

1. Miracles of the Prophets Noah, Hud, Sālih, Abraham, Lot, Jacob, Joseph, David, Solomon, Jonah, Job, Zacharias, Uzair and specially those of Moses and Jesus are explicitly mentioned in the Holy Quran (and do not "occur in the sira and hadith" only)²¹.
2. The Quran clearly ascribes miracles to the Holy Prophet : Rendering

as under of the moon²², ascension of the Holy Prophet,²³ challenge to pray earnestly for the curse of Allah on the liars²⁴, conferring of favour²⁵, prophecy about Romans²⁶, aid at cave "Saur"²⁷, information from Allah²⁸, vision of triumph²⁹, assistance of angels³⁰ and so many other miracles are cited in the Holy Quran.

3. The Holy Quran, itself, is an everlasting miracle of Muhammad³¹.
4. Miracle is not the oldest form of creed but its concept is inseparable from the Holy Quran and Hadith literature.
5. A great stress has been laid in the above-mentioned article on indicating the word 'ayat' (signs) meaning verses instead of "mujiza". So it is being discussed here somewhat in detail. The Holy Quran, along with its marvellous rhetoric³², generally mentions the word 'ayat' (as an apparent sign) which has a wider sense instead of 'mujiza'. The word ayat has been used in the Holy Quran in four different meanings :
 - (a) It means a version or piece of the Holy Quran³³ because every version in it is unprecedented.
 - (b) It means injunction or order³⁴.
 - (c) It means a sign or natural phenomenon³⁵ which is unprecedented.
 - (d) It means miracle : to illumine and illustrate the fact, a comprehensive example is given below :

"God says to Moses : You should not worry ; so go you both with Our Signs, surely We are with you Hearing. Then come to Pharaoh and say : Surely we are the messengers of the Lord of worlds. That send with us the children of Israel. (Pharaoh) said : Did we not bring you up as a child among us and you tarried among us for many years of your life : And you did that deed of yours which you did, and you are one of the ungrateful. He said : I did it then while I was of those unable to see the right course : So I fled from you when I feared you, then my Lord granted me divine wisdom and made me of the Prophets : And is it a favour of which you reminded me that you have enslaved the children of Israel ? Pharaoh said : And what is the Lord of the worlds ? He said : The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, if you would be sure. (Pharaoh) said to those around him : Do you not hear ? He said : Your Lord and the Lord of your fathers of old.

Said he : Most surely your apostle who is sent to you is mad. He said : The Lord of the east and the west and what is between them, if you understand. Said he : If you will take a God besides me, I will most certainly make you one of the imprisoned. He said : What ! even if I bring to you something manifest ? Said he : Bring it then, if you are of the truthful ones. So he cast down his rod, and lo ! it was an obvious serpent. And he drew forth his hand, and lo ! it appeared white to the onlookers. (Pharaoh) said to the chiefs around him : Most surely this is a skilful enchanter. Who desires to turn you out of your land with his enchantment ; what is it then that you advise ? They said : Give him and his brother respite and send heralds into the cities : That they should bring to you every skilful enchanter. So the enchanters were gathered together at the appointed time on the fixed day. And it was said to the people : Will you gather together ? Happily we may follow the enchanters, if they are the vanquishers. And when the enchanters came, they said to Pharaoh : Shall we get a reward if we are the vanquishers ? He said : Yes, and surely you will then be of those who are made near. Moses said to them : Cast what are you going to cast. So they cast down their cords and their rods and said : By Pharaoh's power, we shall most surely be victorious. Then Moses cast down his rod, and lo ! it swallowed up the falsehood which they made. And the enchanters were thrown down prostrate. They said : We believe in the Lord of worlds. The Lord of Moses and Aaron. Said he : You believe in him before I give you permission : most surely he is the chief of you who taught you the enchantment, so you shall know : certainly I will cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and certainly I will crucify you all. They said : No harm : surely to our Lord we go back : Surely we hope that our Lord will forgive us our wrong because we are the first of the believers"³⁶.

The conclusions of this detailed event are explicitly as under and are enumerated below :

1. The signs are bestowed on Moses by God.
2. Pharaoh (before the miracles are performed before him) taunts Moses and calls his explanation.
3. Moses goes on advising Pharaoh to accept divine guidance which he not only ignores but also warns Moses that he would be imprisoned.
4. Moses, observing his rough attitude, now declares that he has brought "something manifest".

5. Pharaoh challenges him to present it.
6. Moses performs apparent miracles.
7. Pharaoh fears and consults the chiefs around him and makes a programme to defeat Moses.
8. Heralds are sent to bring every skilful enchanter.
9. On the guarantee of Pharaoh, that they would get a reward, the enchanters cast down their cords and their rods.
10. Moses cast down his rod which swallowed their falsehood.
11. On this explicit demonstration of miracles the enchanters became believers.
12. It is quite obvious that 'Signs' (ayat) and "something manifest" were not verses but absolute miracles.

There are so many verses in the Holy Quran in which the word 'ayat' is used to denote miracles³⁷.

There is another point of a deep significance in citing the word 'ayat' in the Holy Quran, instead of "Mujiza" that the miracle is not an action of the Prophet himself but it is vouchsafed by the grace of God to a Prophet.

Jesus says to the children of Israel : "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I create for you out of dust like the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a living bird with Allah's permission ; and I heal the blind and the leprous and bring the dead to life with Allah's permission.³⁸ Here Jesus mentions permission of Allah twice and regards his miracle a sign.

In Hadith Literature the same word 'ayat' is used to indicate miracle (Mujiza). Abdullah bin Masood says : "We used to regard miracles as blessings"³⁹.

This is because of the wider sense of the word 'ayat' that it has been cited both in the Holy Quran and Hadith Literature in the sense of miracle. The word 'sign' is even used in the Bible to denote miracle :

"And they went forth and preached everywhere the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following"⁴⁰.

The urdu translation of the word 'signs' (mentioned in the Bible) has been frequently rendered "mujizat"⁴¹.

The modernists have no objection to the use of word 'sign' to indicate miracle : "All the three words "works", "signs" and "power" are used by Christ in describing his disciple's miracles by the Evangelists and by friends and critics".⁴²

Thus the accurate word to denote miracle is determined : "But the stress is on that of which they are signs" the love of God⁴³.

So far as their inference from the word 'ayat' is concerned that it does not mean miracle, it has been proved baseless from the evidence of Bible and biblical literature. Now comes the question why the word "mujiza" was introduced in Islamic theology ?

From the various definitions of miracles cited before, it is clear that in non-Islamic theology there is no distinction between a miracle of a prophet or that of a saint, or something amazing performed by a sorcerer. It is the term miracle that is usually applied but in Islamic theology separate words have been used to denote and differentiate the amazing events, the technical term to signify the miracles of Prophets is "mujiza" and that of a saint is "Karamat" (literally regard or consideration) while gradual spiritual achievement for a non-muslim to show wonderful works is termed as "is-tidraj" (which is but acquired).

So far as the occurrence of the word "mujiza" in later literature is concerned, it is a fact that the terminology of all the sciences, i.e. Hadith, Fiqh, Mysticism, Lexicon, Grammar, Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology, etc., came into existence at the time when they were compiled. The Orientalists perhaps did not give attention to the word 'Bible' itself, the very name was given to it after nine hundred years : "the word Bible is never used in the volume itself, in the English its first appearance is in the 9th century⁴⁴."

Due to the wider⁴⁵ sense of the word 'ayat' it is frequently used in Islamic Literature to denote miracle and when the term "mujiza" first appeared it became an indifferent explicit synonym of the same in later literature, and we see al-Ghazali using it likewise in 'Ihya' at the opening of his chapter on miracles of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) :

”بيان معجزاته و آياته الداله على صدقه“⁴⁶

and, concluding the chapter he cites :

”الى غير ذلك من آياته و معجزاته صلى الله عليه وسلم“⁴⁷

The great theologian Baqillani says :

”ما ظهر على يده صلى الله عليه وسلم من الآيات الباهره و المعجزت القاهره“⁴⁸

Commenting on the uniqueness of the Holy Quran al-Nasafi cites :

”و اظهرها القرآن فهو من أعجب الآيات و ابين الدلالات اذ هو اية عقلية باقية دون كل معجز“⁴⁹

Ibn Hazm has frequently used the words "mujiza" and 'ayat' as synonyms⁵⁰.

There are other words "furqan"⁵¹ (disinction between good and evil), "burhan"⁵² (argument), "bayyinat"⁵³ (clear arguments), used in the Holy Quran to indicate miracles. The early Muslim scholars have used also the words "dalail" (arguments), "alamat" (signs) "Khawariq al-ada" (the breakers of usage) to denote miracles.

NATURE AND FUNCTION OF MIRACLE

Now it is appropriate that from the maze of literal discussion we step into the vale of reality and come to know the exact nature and function of a miracle.

There are two kinds of the law of nature, accustomed "معتاد" and non-accustomed "غير معتاد". There is a harmony in the ordinary and normal course of nature, to which we are habituated and accustomed but there is another law which seems to us a violation of the ordinary law but really it is not. Here the rationalists are confused and they reject the concept of miracle regarding it a violation, which in their opinion, is impossible. So the orientalisists have objected and said :

"There is no nature in Orthodox Islam"⁵⁴.

They ignored that Muslim scholars have regarded the latter law (غير معتاد) as "Khawariq al-ada" (the breakers of the usage) because miracle is not a violation of Nature but it is only against 'ada' (usage or accustomed law). Both of these laws are quite 'natural' for the Creator⁵⁵. Are the births of Adam, Eve and Jesus (happening in quite three different forms) according to the accustomed law? How did the first bird, first cattle, first of the creatures, even this whole universe come into existence? It is obvious that Nature, itself, is according to the law of nature. The basic misunderstanding which impelled rationalists and scientists to contradict miracle is their belief in the concept of 'cause-and effect'. Commenting on this concept Dr. Qadiri says ; "Ghazzali proved the concept of cause and effect to be wrong rationally hundred years before. After him Hume, John Staurt Mill, Spencer and Comte confirmed the same idea"⁵⁶.

Prof. Roohi solves the problem in a different way when he says :

"We accept that miracle is effect but its real cause is will of Allah and mysterious causes act in such a way that we cannot observe them"⁵⁷

The Holy Quran, itself, has mentioned variant causes of creation of certain things. The cause of the creation of mountains is cited :

"And He has cast great mountains in the earth lest it might be convulsed with you"⁵⁸

"And the mountains as projections"⁵⁹ (thereon).

The cause of creation of the stars is :

"And by the stars they find the right way"⁶⁰.

The night and day were created because :

"He has made for you the night and the day, that you may rest therein, and that you may seek of His grace"⁶¹.

“And We made your sleep to be rest (to you)”⁶².

The purpose of the moon is explained :

“They ask you concerning the new moon. Say : They are times appointed for (the benefit of) men, and (for) the pilgrimage”⁶³.

The purpose of the creation of shade, sun, night, day, air and water is peculiar :

“Have you not considered (the work of) your Lord, how He extends the shade ? And if He had pleased He would certainly have made it stationary ; then We have made the sun an indication of it. Then We take it to Ourselves, taking little by little. And He it is Who made the night a covering for you, and the sleep a rest, and He made the day to rise up again. And He it is Who sends the winds as good news before His mercy ; and We send down pure water from the cloud. That We may give life thereby to a dead land and give it for drink, out of what We have created, to cattle and many people”⁶⁴.

Water is told to be the main cause of plantation.

“And He it is who sends down water from the cloud, then We bring forth with it buds of all plants”⁶⁵.

Host and Fire is the effect of wood :

“He Who has made for you the fire (to burn) from the green tree”⁶⁶.

The cattle have been created because :

“You have in them warm clothing and (many) advantages and of them do you eat”⁶⁷.

Wine and gambling are harmful :

“Say : In both of them there is a great sin”⁶⁸.

Honey is health giving :

“In which there is healing for men”⁶⁹.

Consequently everything has been created for a purpose and motive and contains certain peculiarities and functions. Even human beings have been created for a purpose and not just as a result of an accident :

“What : did you then think that We created you in vain”⁷⁰.

But the question arises : is God Himself bound to those inexorable laws or is He the controller of them ? He creates mankind generally from the union of male and female, but He created Adam, Eve and Jesus quite different from this general

rule. He created each and everything at the first instance and then made an accustomed law for its further production. The concept that God is compelled and bound to these common rules of nature is a blasphemy. He is Omnipotent and every action is according to His free will

“Surely Allah has power over all things”.⁷¹

“Surely your Lord is the mighty doer of what He intends”⁷²

“Allah does what He pleases”.⁷³

So the net result of the above discussion is that nothing is unnatural to the Lord, but to Him every thing is quite natural. His will is the real cause of the creation of anything. If the rejector of miracles claims that he himself does not know the cause, his not knowing the fact does not prove the incredibility of miracle because no scientist has dared to claim as yet that he has known all the causes which are at the back of the creation of things.

The concept of miracles is not a new invention of Islamic religious thought, This concept expresses a common belief in the world religions :

“Taoist, Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Hindu, and Muhammadans all believe in the possibility of the miraculous in the case of gifted persons”.⁷⁴

The Christian's view of miracles of Jesus is as follows :

“It is impossible to remove the records of miracles from the Gospels without tearing them to pieces, as these works of Jesus are so wrought into the very texture of his Ministry”.⁷⁵

It is an undeniable fact that all the prophets had been bestowed with miracles. The last of the prophets (peace be upon him), has said :

“There is none among the prophets but he was given such miracles the like of which has been believed by the mankind”.⁷⁶

But to work miracles was never the end of prophethood. The real miracle of a prophet is his resplendant personality, his unblemished character and his blessed teachings. His duty as prophet is never to perform miracles only to play with the susceptibilities of common man but the duty of a prophet is to convey to the people, the divine communication and teach them practical wisdom. A prophet is always an ameliorator. He wins the hearts of the people by his amiability, politeness and high morals and manners. The first mission of each and every prophet is to centralize the attention of mankind to their Beneficent, Merciful Creator and to worship Him sincerely :

“And they were not enjoined anything except that they should worship Allah, (and be) sincere to him in obedience”.⁷⁷

This mission was not a limited one, but to teach each and every nation a prophet was sent :

“And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them”⁷⁸.

“For every people there is a guide”.⁷⁹

“And certainly we raised in every nation a messenger, saying : Serve Allah and shun the devil”.⁸⁰

Noah, Hud, Saleh, Shuaib, Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them) all were sent to their nations to fulfil the same purpose.⁸¹ The same mission was assigned to the last of the prophets (peace be upon him and them) to convey it to all the men⁸².

“That you should serve none but Allah. Surely I am to you from Him a warner and a giver of goods news”.⁸³

After conveying the first divine message, the duties of the Holy Prophet are explained as follows :

“Reciting to them His messages and purifying them and teaching them the Book and the wisdom”⁸⁴.

From the above mentioned verse it is easily concluded that :

1. A prophet conveys Divine Communication to the people.
2. He ameliorates and purifies their hearts.
3. He teaches the Book containing injunctions of God.
4. He teaches them the practical wisdom to improve their conduct in every walk of life.

If we contemplate and ponder over the complete history of the Prophets we see that during the whole period of their Prophethood, despite their miraculous power, they fulfilled their mission morally. Morality in its climax may be seen in Muhammad's resplendent character. God says :

“And surely thou hast sublime morals”.⁸⁵

The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H), himself, indicated his mission :

”بعثت لانتم حسن الاخلاق“⁸⁶

If there were no miracles, good natured people would have accepted him only on his high character. Ibn Rawaha says.

”لو لم تكن فيه آيات مبينه لكان منظره ينبيك بالخير“⁸⁷

Ghazzali, commenting on the miracles of the Holy Prophet, indicated and confirmed this idea :

”بل كانت شمائله و احواله شواهد قاطعة بصدقه“⁸⁸

It is apparent from the history that Aaron did not demand any miracle from Moses, and likewise Khadija, Abu Bakr, Ali, embraced Islam only believing in Muhammad's (peace be upon him) noble character. Khadija's remarks were as follows when she believed in his prophethood :

”والله ما يخزيك ابداً فانك لتصل الرحم و تحمل الكل و تكسب المعدوم و تقوى الضعيف و تعين على نوائب الحق“⁸⁹

Heraclius, on hearing the replies to his enquiries about the moral character of the Holy Prophet from Abu Sufyan (then an opponent), said :

”ان يك ما تقول فيه حق فانه نبي“⁹⁰

PURPOSE & MOTIVE OF MIRACLE

Here the question arises, in the presence of these facts, that if the real miracle of a prophet is his noble and unblemished character, what purpose, then, miracle itself fulfils? The Holy Quran has indicated different purposes of the miracles which are meant in general, to be a support to the Prophet and as such they strengthen the cause of prophethood, but in the particular their purposes and performances are seen quite different from each other.

The first purpose of the miracle is to strengthen the belief of the prophet himself. So that his eyes witness what his heart believes in. It does not mean that the Prophet lacks a strong faith in God but perceptible proofs become strengthening evidence to confirm his belief as we see in the case of Uzair⁹¹. Similar is the case of Abraham so that his heart may feel tranquility⁹². Moses, before going to Pharaoh is fully satisfied by experience following these words of sympathy “Go with your signs, you two and those who follow you shall be uppermost”⁹³. Similarly the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) has been bestowed with the blessings of ‘Miraj’ (ascension)⁹⁴. It is obvious that all these miracles were explicitly meant to provide a strong perceptible evidence to confirm their firm belief.

The second important purpose of miracle is to awaken the consciousness of the disbelievers to the fact that the prophets have a Divine purpose to fulfil and thus they are directly helped by God. Miracles in this aspect are thus occasional expressions of God's special purpose in the universe in connection with His

messengers. These are designed to serve as eye-openers against the blindness of a world perverted by sin. These are not so much disturbances in the natural order of the universe as they are acts of the Lord meant to shake people out of their heedlessness and to wrench back a sinful world into its proper order. The miracles of this category have nothing to do with their practical problems of life but they impress and inspire their faith and persuade them to accept the divine message. They think that the divine helps is with the prophet and consequently with them who accept the divine message. The Holy Quran indicates that when the rod of Moses, becoming a serpent, devoured what the enchanters had wrought they cast down making obeisance and said :

“We believe in the Lord of Aaron and Moses”⁹⁵.

On the threat of Pharaoh that he would cut off their hands and feet on opposite sides and that he would certainly crucify them on the trunks of the palm-trees they boldly replied :

“We do not prefer you to what has come to us of clear arguments and to Him Who made us, therefore, decide what you are going to decide ; you can only decide about the world’s life. Surely we believe in our in our Lord that He may forgive us our sins”⁹⁶.

It is obvious that this category of miracles illumined their hearts. There is a category of people who embrace true faith in this way. We see that noble men of Quraish embraced Islam on the fulfilment of the prophecy of victory of Romans over Persians⁹⁷.

The third and the most important purpose of miracles is to strengthen the belief of believers ; mostly they solve the practical problems of life. Making mountains and birds declare glory of God, subservient to David,⁹⁸ making the wind blow violent, and the devils subservient to Solomon⁹⁹, making the clouds to give shade and sending manna and quails on Israelites¹⁰⁰, flowing of twelve springs from a rock by the rod of Moses¹⁰¹, healing the blind and the leprous, bringing dead to life and other miracles performed by Jesus,¹⁰² assistance of angels,¹⁰³ and numerous miracles of the Holy Prophet¹⁰⁴ (P.B.U.H.), belong to this category. To tranquilise the hearts of the believers, to intensity the faith is basic motive of this kind of miracle. The Holy Quran illumines this motive in explicit words :

“Allah did not make it but as good news for you and that your heart might be at ease thereby”¹⁰⁵.

The Holy Quran regards it a support (NASR) and says :

“Certainly Allah helped you in many battlefields”¹⁰⁶.

Divine help in the field of Badr is a clear evidence of such a support.

“And Allah did certainly assist you at Badr when you were weak”¹⁰⁷.

This divine help was provided to all the prophets at the time of their dire need :

“Until when the prophets despaired and the people became sure that they were indeed told a lie, our help came to them and whom He pleased was delivered ; and Our punishment is not averted from the guilty people”¹⁰⁸.

Ab-dullah Ibn Masood, an important companion of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) verified this motive of miracles in clear words :

”و عن عبد الله ابن مسعود قال كنا نعد الايات بركة و التم تعدونها تخويفا كنا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في سفر فقل الماء فقال اطلبوا فضلة من ماء فجاءوا باناء فيه ماء قليل و ادخل يده في الاناء ثم قال حي على الطهور المبارك و البركة من الله و لقد رايت الماء ينبع من بين اصابع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم و لقد كنا نسمع تسبيح الطعام و هو يوكل“¹⁰⁹.

It is obvious that this kind of miracles not only strengthen the faith of the believers but also solve their practical problems of life and further divine help comes in the time of need and danger to provide them security from the opponents.

The fourth purpose of miracles is to punish such rejectors who exceed the limits and make all possible efforts for resistance to the function and mission of prophethood. It is evident from the history of the prophets that whenever a prophet claimed prophethood, there were only few goodnatured people who accepted his message while the majority of the people rejected the prophet and persecuted him. Despite of their noble character :

1. The prophets are rejected by the mass of people¹¹⁰.
2. Their rejection is regarded as the denial of divine communications.¹¹¹
3. The prophets, being the sincere servants of God, carry on their mission with firmness and constancy¹¹².
4. The rejectors intensify their persecution of the Prophets.

At last the stage is set when divine help comes and miracles like ark of Noah, she-camel of Saleh, rod of Moses on sea, etc. appear and the cruel rejectors, after a considerable intermission, are smashed and become a lesson for the coming generation¹¹³.

The main purpose of this kind of miracle is to warn and chastise the rejectors. The Holy Quran says :

“And We do not send such signs but to make fear”¹¹⁴.

The Orientalists and even some Muslim rationalists have concluded from the first part of this verse that miracles were stopped and not sent on the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.). The verse comes as follows :

“And nothing hindered Us that we should send signs except that the ancients rejected them and We gave to Samood she-camel a manifest sign—but on her account they did injustice and We do not send such signs but to make men fear”.

It is obvious that in the light of this verse the objection is quite baseless :

1. The ancients did not take a lesson from the miracles of the prophets.
2. It was advisable that God may not send further signs because the disbelievers do not benefit from them because of their baseless and useless demand.
3. He gave to Samood a she-camel—a magnificent sign.
4. But on her account most of them did injustice.
5. As a result of this Divine help came to the prophet Sāleh and his believers.
6. The purpose of such miracles is a warning to the rejectors.

This was due to the noble sentiments of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.), being the mercy for humanity¹¹⁵, who not only always forgave but also prayed for the opponents to embrace the truth, that such kind of miracles—to wash out the surface of the earth from disbelievers—were not sent.

On motive and purpose of the narration and mention of miracles in the Holy Quran is to broaden the imagination as Tantāwi has pointed out :

”و القرآن الكريم جاءت فيه تلك العجائب لا على سبيل الخرافة بل على سبيل المعجزة وهي تودى الفرض من توسيع الخيال ثم ترى فيه النظر فى الارض والسماء والعجائب الطبيعة“¹¹⁶.

But the everlasting motive of the mention of miracles in my opinion is to strengthen the faith of all the believers of all the generations to come : that God helps his true servants. In short, the very purpose of mention of miracles is to bestow them with courage, firmness, steadfastness, righteousness, resolution, determination, devotedness and extreme diligence so that the true ones achieving and attaining self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control, and spiritual enlightenment, may trust in Allah and serve His cause.

The Quranic concept of miracle is unique as is the Holy Quran itself because of its special characteristics :

1. Miracle is not part of prophethood¹¹⁷ as it is considered in Christianity,

the central doctrine of which is itself based on alleged miracle¹¹⁸. The Holy Quran says :

“Nor was it possible for a messenger to bring a sign except with Allah’s permission”¹¹⁹. Jesus referring to his miracles, mentions twice that he performs them only with the permission of Allah¹²⁰. The Holy Prophet (P.B.U,H.) regards it the blessing from God¹²¹.

2. The real miracle of a prophet is his high resplendent and unblemished character. The Holy Quran mentions it as evidence¹²² so the criterion of belief in prophethood is the truth of his teachings and never the miracle alone.

al-Ghazzali explains this idea :

”فمن ذلك الطريق فاطلب اليقين بالنبوة لا من قلب العصاء ثعبانا و شق القمر“¹²³.

3. The prophet is never desirous to show miracles. The Holy Prophet (P.B. U.H.) is advised by God to refuse to perform miracles when demanded by disbelievers, not to accept the truth, but only to try to refute the prophet. The Holy Quran says :

“And they say : We will by no means believe in you until you call a fountain to gush forth from the earth for us. Or you should have a garden of palms and grapes in the midst of which you should cause rivers to flow forth, gushing out : Or you should cause the heaven to come down upon us in pieces as you think, or bring Allah and the angels face to face (with us) : Or you should have a house of gold, or you should ascend into heaven, and we will not believe in your ascending until you bring down to us a book which we may read. Say : Glory be to my Lord : am I aught but a mortal prophet”¹²⁴.

Ibn Hisham has illustrated their baseless demands and given a detailed account of the same¹²⁵.

4. The basic characteristic of the Quranic concept of miracle is that the prophet by performing miracles does not become divine as believed in Christianity naming Jesus ‘God the son’ and adopting quite irrational beliefs of ‘Trinity’, ‘Incarnation’ and Atonement or as believed in—carnation of Vishnu in Hinduism. But the Prophet remains a man of esteemed character and a servant of God¹²⁶.
5. The miracle is not a purpose itself but rather an evidence and a support to make men believe the truth¹²⁷.

6. The Holy Quran, itself, is an outstanding evidential miracle, the uniqueness of which is admitted both by friends and the foes¹²⁸.

No religion in the world has ever presented such a refined and pure concept of miracles as Islam did.

ORTHODOX INTERPRETATION OF THE MIRACLES MENTIONED IN THE HOLY QURAN

After explaining the explicit Quranic concept of miracle, it will be most appropriate to give Orthodox interpretations of the miracles mentioned in the Holy Quran. As it is very difficult, rather impossible, to explain all the miracles narrated in the Holy Quran, I have made a selection of some popular miracles, not pertaining to one but to various famous prophets so that a real picture of the orthodox view point of our celebrated commentators may be presented.

THE DROWNING OF PHARAOH

The Holy Quran says :

“And when We parted the sea for you, so We saved you and drowned the people of Pharaoh while you saw” (2 : 50).

Allama al-Tabari, (d. 310 A. H.) explaining the drowning of Pharaoh, says :

”و معنى قوله فرقنا بكم فصلنا بكم البحر لانهم كانوا اثني عشر سبطا ففرق البحر اثني عشر طريقاً - فسلك كل سبط منهم طريقاً منها“¹²⁹.

The great scholar al-Baghawi (d. 516 A. H.) discussing the same states :

”فاوحى الله اليه ان اضرب بعصاك البحر فضربه فام يطعه فاوحى الله اليه ان كنه فضربه و قال انفلق يا ابا خالد باذن الله تعالى فانفلق فكان كل فرق كالطود العظيم و ظهر فيه اثني عشر طريقاً لكل سبط طريق واضح و ارتفع الماء بين كل طريقين كالجبيل و ارسل الله الريح و الشمس على قعر البحر حتى صار يبساً“¹³⁰.

Allama al-Zamakhshari (d. 528 A. H.) commenting on this event explains it in the same manner :

”(فرقنا) فصلنا بين بعضه و بعض حتى صارت فيه مسالك لكم . . . لان المسالك كانت اثني عشر على عدد الاسباط“¹³¹.

He also cites an interesting dialogue of Israelites as follows :

”وروى ان بنى اسرائيل قالوا لموسى - اين اصحابنا لا نراهم قال - سيروا فانهم على طريق مثل طريقكم - قالوا - لا نرضى حتى نراهم - فقال - اللهم اعنى على اخلاقهم السيئة فاوحى اليه - ان قل بعصاك هكذا فقال بها على الجيطان فصارت فيها كوى فتراموا و تسامعوا كلامهم (وانتم تنظرون) الى ذلك و تشاهدونه و لاتشكون فيه“¹³²

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The celebrated scholar, al-Razi (d. 606 A. H.) mentioning the drowning of Pharaoh says :

”وقوله (فرقنا) اي فصلنا بين بعضه و بعض حتى صارت فيه مسالك لكم . . . فانشق البحر اثني عشر جبلا في كل واحد منها طريق“¹³³۔

He has also mentioned like al-Baghawi and al-Zamakhshari the dialogue between Israelites.

Allama al-Qurtubi (d. 671 A. H.) explains the same as such :

”فضربه به موسى بعصاه (فانفلق فكان كل فرق كالطود العظيم) فكان فيه اثنا عشر فرقا لا ثني عشر سبطاً لكل سبط طريق يتراءون و ذانك ان اطواد الماء صار فيها طيقاناً و شبائيك يرى منها بعضهم بعضا - فلما خرج اصحاب موسى و قام اصحاب فرعون التطم البحر عليهم فاغرقهم“¹³⁴۔

The great scholar, al-Baidawi, discussing it remarks :

”واذ فرقنا بكم البحر فلقناه و فصلنا بين بعضه و بعض حتى حصلت فيه مسالك يساوكم فيه او بسبب انجاؤكم“¹³⁵۔

Allama al-Nasafi (d. 710 A. H.) explaining it says :

واذ فرقنا بكم البحر فلقناه و فصلنا بين بعضه و بعض حتى صارت فيه مسالك لكم“¹³⁶۔

The great commentator, al-Khazin (d. 725 A. H.) explains it and also mentions the name of that sea :

”واذ فرقنا بكم البحر) اي فصلنا بعضه من بعض وجعلنا فيه مسالك بسبب دخولكم البحر و سعى بحر الاتساعه . . . فامر الله البحر ان ياخذهم فالتطم عليهم و اغرقهم اجمعين“¹³⁷۔

Allama Abu Hayyan al-Undulasi (d. 745 A. H.) commenting on (2 : 50) says :

”و لم يختلفوا في ان فرق البحر كان بعدد الاسباط اثني عشر مسلماً“¹³⁸۔

The great scholar Ibn Kathir (d. 774 A. H.) explains (2 : 50) as such :

”فضربه فانفلق . . . يقول مثل الجبل ثم صار موسى و من معه و اتبعهم فرعون في طريقهم حتى اذا تاموا فيه اطبقه الله عليهم“¹³⁹۔

Imam al-Mahallī (d. 864 A. H.) discussing the same tells :

”واذ فرقنا بكم بكم البحر حتى دخلتموه هارين من عدوكم فانجيتكم من الغرق و اغرقنا ال فرعون قومه معه و انتم تنظرون الى انطباق البحر عليهم“¹⁴⁰۔

Allama al-Syūṭi (d. 911 A. H.) in his another commentary of the Holy Quran, explaining the same tells :

”والله لفرق بهم البحر حتى صار طريقاً يبساً يمشون فيه فانجاهم و اغرق ال فرعون عدوهم نعم من عند الله“¹⁴¹۔

The great scholar, Abu Saud (d. 982 A. H.) discussing it says :

”و فصلنا بين بعضه و بعض حتى حصلت مسالك . . . فضربه بها فظهر فيه اثنا عشر طريقاً يابسا“¹⁴²۔

The celebrated Imam Shah Waliullah (d. 1176 A. H.) translates the verse in a way that it becomes self-explanatory :

”و آنوقت کہ شگفتیم برائے شما دریا را پس خلاص کردیم شما را و غرق ساختیم کسان فرعون را و شما میدیدید“¹⁴³۔

The great scholar, al-Shaukani (d. 1250 A. H.) illuming ”انتم تنظرون“ tells :

”ای ينظر بعضكم الى البعض الاخر من السالكين فى البحر و قيل نظروا الى انفسهم ينجون و الى ال فرعون يغرقون“¹⁴⁴۔

The great scholar, Allama al-Alusi, explaining the beauty of the word الفرق and depicting the miraculous nature of the event, tells :

”و الفرق الفصل بين الشيتين و تعديته الى البحر يتضمن معنى الشق اى فلقناه و فصلنا بين بعضه و بعض لا جلكم و بسبب انجائكم“¹⁴⁵۔

The most modern scientific interpreter of the Holy Quran, Allama Tantawi al-Jawhari, referring to the Bible concludes :

”ابان الله فى هذه اليواقيت ماقصه فى سفر الخروج فى التوراة و كيف اغرق فرعون و جنوده و نجى موسى و قومه“¹⁴⁶۔

The great Shia commentator of 6th Century A. H., al-Tabrasi. repeats the traditional exegesis and concludes :

”فلما خرج اخر من كان مع موسى من البحر و دخل اخر من كان مع فرعون البحر اطبق الله عليهم الماء فغرقوا جميعاً و نجا موسى و من معه“¹⁴⁷۔

The Egyption scholar Rashid Raza, discussing the drowning of Pharaoh, cites the opinion of his teacher, Mufti Abduh along with his own explanation as follows :

”فجعلنا لكم فيه طريقاً يابساً سلكتموه فى هربكم من فرعون . . . (قال الامتاذ الامام) فلق البحر كان من معجزات موسى و قد قلنا فى رساله التوحيد ان الخوارق الجائزة عقلاً اى التى ليس فيها اجتماع النقيضين ولا ارتفاعهما لا مانع من وقوعها بقدره الله تعالى فى يد نبي من الانبياء“¹⁴⁸۔

Shah Abdul Qadir, explaining it observes :

”پانی بہت گہرا تھا ہارہ جگہ سے پھٹ کر گلیان پڑ گئیں ہارہ قبیلہ بنی اسرائیل اس میں پیٹھے بیچ میں پانی کے پہاؤ کھڑے رہ گئے“¹⁴⁹۔

Maulana Maudoodi is very clear in translating this verse as follows :

”یاد کرو وہ وقت جب ہم نے سمندر پہاڑ کر تمہارے لیے راستہ بنایا پھر اس میں سے تمہیں بخیریت گزروا لیا پھر وہیں تمہاری آنکھوں کے سامنے فرعونوں کو غرقاب کیا“¹⁵⁰۔

Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani explains the verse in the same traditional way :

”اور جب پہاڑ دیا ہم نے تمہاری وجہ سے دریا کو پھر بچا دیا ہم نے تم کو اور ڈبو دیا فرعون کے لوگوں کو“¹⁵¹۔

It is obvious that right from the earliest centuries upto the present day the commentators have been explaining the verse in a similar manner. Leaving the minor differences of detail given in them, it is explicitly believed that this event was of a miraculous nature and not a consequence of so-called natural causation or some accidental favour but a clear miracle of Moses bestowed on him by Lord Almighty.

MIRACLE OF LOSS OF SPEECH OF ZACHARIAS

Now we collect and compare the interpretations of a miracle of Zacharias which has been mentioned in the Quran. The Holy Quran says: "He said: My Lord appoint a sign for me. Said He: The sign is that thou cannot speak to men for three days except by signs" (3 : 39).

The celebrated commentator al-Tabari, discussing 3 : 39 states that the event was one of a miraculous nature but that it was due to punishment.

”انما عوقب ذالک لان المائکة شافعتہ مشافعة بذالک . . . فاخذ علیه بلسانه فجعل لا یقدر علی الکلام الا ما او ما و اشار“¹⁵²۔

Imam al-Farra al-Baghwi explaining this event tells :

”وقال اکثر المفسرین عقل لسانه عن الکلام مع الناس ثلاثة ايام وقال قتاده امسک لسانه عن الکلام عقوبة له بسؤاله“¹⁵³۔

The great scholar, al-Zamakhshari, concludes :

”وانما خص تکلم الناس ليعلمه انه یحبس لسانه عن القدرة علی تکلمهم خاصة مع ابقاء قدرته علی التکلم بذكر الله . . . یعنی فی ايام عجزک عن تکلم الناس وهی من الايات الباهرة“¹⁵⁴۔

Commenting on the same event, Imam al-Razi discusses it in detail and shows various aspects of its miraculous nature :

”ثم اعلم ان تلك الواقعة كانت مشتملة علی المعجز من وجوه - احدها - ان قدرته علی التکلم بالتسبیح و الذکر و عجزه عن التکلم بامور الدنيا من اعظم المعجزات و ثانيها - ان حصول ذالک المعجز فی تلك الايام المقدره مع سلامة البنية و اعتدال المزاج من جملة المعجزات و ثالثها -

ان اخباره باله متى حصلت الحالة فقد حصل الولد ثم ان الامر خرج على وفق هذا الخبر يكون ايضا من المعجزات“¹⁵⁵۔

Allama al-Qurtabi, supports the view point of al-Tabari and Ibn Qutaiba :

”فعاقيه الله تعالى بان اصابه السكوت عن كلام الناس بسؤاله لاية بعد مشافهة الملائكة اياه قاله اكثر المفسرون“¹⁵⁶۔

The great scholar, al-Baidāwi, concludes that this was a token of thanks :

”و انما حبس لسانه عن مكالمتهم خاصة ليخلص المدة لذكر الله و شكره“¹⁵⁷۔

The great commentator and theologian, al-Nasafi points out its miraculous nature :

”و انما خص تكليم الناس ليعلم انه يحبس لسانه عن القدرة عن تكليمهم خاصة مع ابقاء قدرته على التكلم بذكر الله“¹⁵⁸۔

Allama al-Khazin, discussing this event regards it a great miracle :

”و هذه من الايات الباهرة و المعجزات الظاهرة لان قدرته على التسبيح و الذكر مع عجزه عن تكليم الناس بامور الدنيا و ذلك مع صحة الجسم و سلامة الجوارح من اعظم المعجزات“¹⁵⁹۔

Abu Hayyan refers to the nature of miracle as such :

”و كان الاعجاز في هذه الاية من جهة قدرته على ذكر الله و عجزه عن تكليم الناس مع سلامة البنية¹⁶⁰ و اعتدال المزاج و من جهة وقوع العلوق و حصوله على وفق الاخبار“¹⁶¹۔

The celebrated commentator Ibn Kathir, explains it as such :

”اي اشارة لا تستطيع النطق مع انك سوى صحيح“¹⁶²۔

Allama al-Mahalli & Suyūti explain the verse as such :

”ايتك عليه ان لا تكلم الناس اي تمتنع من كلامهم بخلاف ذكر الله تعالى“¹⁶³۔

Allama al-Syūti, in his other commentary, explains it in the similar manner :

”اعتقل لسانه من غير مرض و اخرج عن السدى قال اعتقل لسانه ثلاثة ايام و ثلاث ليال“¹⁶⁴۔

Abu Saud points out the miraculous nature of dumbness :

”اي ان لا تقدر على تكليمهم“¹⁶⁵۔

The celebrated scholar, Shah Waliullah translates the verse to depict its real meaning :

”نشانه تو آنست كه سخن نتوانى گفتن با مردمان سه شبانه روز در حالتيكه صحيح المزاج باشى“¹⁶⁶۔

Al-Shaukani, regards it a blessing though he has also mentioned the viewpoint of al-Qurtabi :

و وجه جعل الاية هذا لتخلص تلك الايام لذكر الله سبحانه شكر ، على ما انعم به عليه“¹⁶⁷۔

Allama Alusi supports the idea of his predecessors :

”ای ان لا تقدر علی تکلیمهم من غیر افة و هو الانسب بكونه اية و الاونق لما فی سورة مریم“¹⁶⁸۔

al-Tantawi concludes that the motive of this miracle was alongwith its indication of pregnancy, to provide Zacharias a chance for a complete devotional attachment to his Lord :

”(و اذکر ربک کثیراً) فی ایام حبس لسانک عن کلام الناس لانه هو القصد من حبسه“¹⁶⁹۔

Jassas al-Razi (d. 370 A. H.) points out that Zacharias asked for a sign to make it a cause of his pleasure :

”انه طلب اية لوقت الحمل لیجعل السرور به“¹⁷⁰۔

The celebrated Shia scholar al-Tabarsi, tells the same idea :

”فجعل الله تعالی تلك العلامة فی اساک لسانه عن الکلام الا ایما من غیر افة“¹⁷¹۔

Shah Abdul Qadir explains this miracle as follows :

”پھر جب حضرت یحییٰ ماں کے پیٹ میں پڑے تو حضرت زکریا کو تین روز یہی حالت رہی کہ آدمی سے کلام نہ کر سکتے“¹⁷²۔

Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi explains it as follows :

”Whereby I may know that my wife has conceived and in order that I may prepare some special offering to thee“¹⁷³۔

He has also referred to N. T. (LK. 1 : 20-22).

Maulana Maudoodi explains it as such :

”نشانی یہ ہے کہ تم تین دن تک لوگوں سے اشارہ کے سوا کوئی بات چیت نہ کرو گے (یا نہ کر سکو گے)“¹⁷⁴۔

Maulana Usmani repeats the idea cited by al-Jassas :

”جس سے معلوم ہو جائے کہ اب حمل قرار پا گیا ہے تاکہ قرب ولادت کے آثار دیکھ کر مسرت تازہ حاصل ہو اور شکر نعمت میں بیش از بیش مشغول رہوں“¹⁷⁵۔

From the above discussion it may be easily deduced that all the commentators right from the earlier centuries till now have undoubtedly regarded it a great miracle. Though there is very slight difference found in its details and its motive, or whether it was a punishment or a blessing, there is absolutely no difference of opinion that it had a miraculous nature.

THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

The Holy Quran says :

“And a messenger to the children of Israel (saying) I have come to you with a sign from your Lord that I make for you out of dust the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird with Allah’s permission, and I heal the blind and the leprous, and bring the dead to life with Allah’s permission ; and inform you of what you store in your houses. Surely there is a sign in this for you, if you are believers” (3 : 49).

The celebrated commentator of the Holy Quran, Allama al-Tabari explains the miracles of Jesus. He points out that the bird, Jesus formed and made alive, was “Khaffash” (a bat)¹⁷⁶, because it was the strongest bird in connection with its bodily construction and for this very cause demanded from Jesus and that Jesus used to heal the blind from birth and the leprous because in those days these two diseases were incurable :

”و ذلك ان الكمه و البرص لا علاج لهما فيقدر على ابرائه لان من المعجزات مع سائر الايات التي اعطاء الله اياها دلالة على نبوته“¹⁷⁷.

He has further clarified that no medical treatment was being given to the patients but the source of their remedy was only Jesus’s prayer¹⁷⁸.

Concluding and giving the summary of the discussion on miracles of Jesus, he remarks :

”مع المعجزات التي اعلمهم انه ياتي بها حجة على نبوته و صدقه في خبره ان الله ارسله اليهم من خلق الطير من الطين. و ابراء الاكمه و الا برص و احياء الموتى باذن الله التي لا يطيقها احد من البشر الا من اعطاء الله ذلك علما له على صدقه و اية له . . . انباء، عن الغيب الذي لا سبيل لاحد من البشر الذين سبيلهم سبيله عليه“¹⁷⁹

al-Farra al-Baghwi, pointing out the bird that Jesus formed, says that the bird flew temporarily :

”لم يخلق غير الخفاش كان يطير مادام الناس ينظرون اليه فاذا غاب عن اعينهم سقط ميتا ليميز فعل الخلق من فعل الله“¹⁸⁰

Telling the motive of miracle of healing the blind and leprous he says :

”و انما خص هذين لانهما داءان عيائان و كان الغالب في زمن موسى الطب فاراهم الله المعجزة من جنس ذلك“¹⁸¹.

He further remarks that Jesus quickened only four persons :

”قد احي اربعة النفس عاذر و ابن العجوز و ابنة العاشر و مام بن نوح“¹⁸².

The great scholar, al-Zamakhshari, mentions the philosophy of repeating باذن الله in the verse :

”وكرر (باذن الله) دفعاً لوجه من توهم فيه اللاهوتيه“¹⁸³۔

He remarks that the basic motive of the miracles of Jesus was to establish and confirm his prophethood :

”قلت لان الله تعالى جعله له علامة يعرف منها انه رسول كماثر الرسل اي جثتكم باية بعد اخرى مما ذكرت لكم. من خلق الطير و الابرء و الاحياء و الانباء بالخفا يا و بغيره من ولادتي بغير اب و من كلامي في المهد و من سائر ذلك“¹⁸⁴۔

The great Imam al-Razi, repeating the similar exegesis establishes possibility of such miracles and argues :

”بل الله تعالى كان يخلق الحياة في ذلك الجسم بقدرته عند نفخة عيسى عليه السلام فيه على سبيل اظهار المعجزات و هذا هو الحق“¹⁸⁵۔

The great scholar al-Qurtabi points out that Jesus breathed only and it was God who gave life :

”و النفخ من عيسى و الخلق من الله“¹⁸⁶۔

He has explained other miracles as told by al-Tabari. The celebrated theologian and commentator, al-Nasafi, explains the miracles of Jesus in a similar manner¹⁸⁷. The great scholar, Ibn Kathir, indicating that the miracles of Jesus were meant to establish his prophethood tells that healing of the blind of birth was really a great miracle and this and all other miracles happened in an age of physicians being a challenge to them :

” (الاكمه) هو الذي يولد اعمى و هو اشبه لانه ابغ في المعجزة و اقوى في التحدى و اما عيسى فبعث في زمن الاطباء و اصحاب علم الطبيعة فجاء هم من الايات بما لا سبيل لاحد اليه فمن اين للطبيب قدرة على احياء الجماد او على مداواة الاكمه و الابرص و بعث من هو في قبره رهين الى يوم التناد“¹⁸⁸۔

Allama Alusi points out the philosophy of the word ”اذن الله“.

”وقيد الاحياء بالاذن كما فعل في الاول لانه خارق عظيم يكاد يتوهم منه الوهية فاعله لانه ليس من جنس افعال البشر و كان احياءه بالدعا“¹⁸⁹۔

Shah Waliullah, the celebrated Indian scholar, translates these verses in such a way that the credibility of the miracles of Jesus is established explicitly :

”من می سازم برائے شما از گل مانند شکل پرندہ پس دم میزنم در آن. پس میباشد پرندہ بحکم خدا و به میکنم کور مادر زاد را و برص دار را و زنده میسازم مردگان را بحکم خدا و خبر میدهم شما را به آنچه میخورید و آنچه ذخیره می نمید در خانهای خود“¹⁹⁰۔

Shah Abdul Qadir's urdu translation is also of the same nature :

”میں بنا دیتا ہوں تم کو مٹی کی صورت جانور کی پھر اس میں پھونک مارتا ہوں تو وہ ہو جاوے اڑتا جانور اللہ کے حکم سے اور چنگا کرتا ہوں جو اندھا پیدا ہو اور کوڑھی اور جلاتا ہوں مردے اللہ کے حکم سے اور بتا دیتا ہوں تم کو جو کہا کر آؤ اور جو رکھیاؤ اپنے گھر میں“¹⁹¹۔

The modern popular commentators Maulana Maudoodi and Maulana Usmani have explained the miracles of Jesus in the same traditional manner.¹⁹²

Maulana Usmani, answering the rejectors of miracles of Jesus confirms the credibility of miracles and argues that they are accepted by all the old and new commentators :

”حضرت مسیح کا بن باپ پیدا ہونا یا ابواء اکمہ و ابرص اور احياء موتی وغیرہ معجزات دکھلانا اہل اسلام میں تمام سلف و خلف کے نزدیک مسلم رہا ہے۔ صحابہ اور تابعین میں ایک قول بھی اس کے انکار میں دکھلایا نہیں جا سکتا“^{192A}۔

THE MIRACLE OF ARK OF NOAH AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE UNBELIEVERS

The Holy Quran says : “So We delivered him and those with him in the ark, and We drowned those who rejected our signs. Surely they were a blind people” (7 : 64).

The end of the people of Noah is explained by Ibn Abbas as follows :

”فانجیناہ و الذین معہ فی الفلک) فی السفینۃ من الغرق و العذاب (و اغرقنا الذین کذبوا بایتنا) بکتابتنا و رسولنا نوح“¹⁹³۔

Allama al-Tabari explains the same as follows :

”و اغرق اللہ الذین کذبوا بحججہ و لم يتبعوا رسلہ. و لم یقبوا نصیحتہ ایامہ فی اللہ بالطوفان“¹⁹⁴۔

al-Farra al-Baghawi,¹⁹⁵ al-Zamakshari,¹⁹⁶ al-Razi,¹⁹⁷ al-Baidawi,¹⁹⁸ al-Nasafi¹⁹⁹ and al-Khazin²⁰⁰ explain the end of the people of Noah in the same manner.

Abu Hayyan, like his predecessors, tells that the very cause of their destruction was their rejecting the prophet :

”و فی قوله و اغرقنا الذین کذبوا اعلام بعلۃ الغرق و هو التکذیب“²⁰¹۔

The great scholar, Ibn Kathir discussing the end of the people of Noah, concludes:

”فتبین تعالیٰ فی هذه القصة انه انتقم لا ولیائه من اعدائه و انجی رسوله و المومنین و اهلك اعدائهم من الکافرین“²⁰²۔

Explaining the word 'Noah' he tells :

”و قال يزيد الرقاشي انما سمى نوحاً لكثرة ما نوح على نفسه“²⁰³۔

The co-authors of Jalalain, al-Mahalli²⁰⁴ and al-Suyuti²⁰⁵ and the great Shia scholar al-Tabarsi²⁰⁶ also explain it in the same traditional manner :

Shah Waliullah translates the verse to prove the credibility of this event :

”پس نجات دادیم او را و کسانی را کہ باوی بودند در کشتی و غرق ساختیم کسانی را کہ دروغ داشته بودند ایات مارا“²⁰⁷۔

Allama al-Alusi has indicated a nice point :

”و تقديم الانجاء على الاغراق للمسارعة الى الاخبار به و الايدان بسبق الرحمة على الغضب“²⁰⁸۔

al-Tantavi discussing the end of the people of Noah, points out that the very motive of narration of such events of destruction of various people was to satisfy the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) at a time when he was feeling loneliness and experienced tortures from enemies. He concludes :

”وان من اعجب العجب ان يكون تاريخه - كتواريخ الانبياء الذين قصهم فكان في اول امره مكذبا وفي اخر امره منصور و هذه في الحقيقة اكبر معجزه لانه تنبها بما سيحصل و قد تم كما جاء به الوحي“²⁰⁹۔

Shah Abdul Qadir, translates the verse in traditional way :

”پھر ہم نے بچا لیا اوسکو اور جو اوسکے ساتھ تھے کشتی میں اور غرق کیے جو جو ٹہلاتے تھے ہماری آیتیں“²¹⁰۔

Maulana Maudoodi, explaining it in the same manner, refutes those who seek some scientific causes of such events and remarks :

”ظاہر بین سائنسدان اور حقیقت سے نا واقف مورخین و فلاسفوں کا ایک کثیر گروہ نوع انسانی پر مسلط ہے جو اس قسم کے تمام واقعات کسی توجیہ طبعیاتی قوانین یا تاریخی اسباب سے کر کے اس کو بھلاوے میں ڈالتا رہتا ہے اور اسے کبھی یہ سمجھنے کا موقع نہیں دیتا کہ اوپر کوئی خدا بھی موجود ہے۔ جو غلط کار قوموں کو پہلے مختلف طریقوں سے ان کی غلط کاری پر متنبہ کرتا ہے اور جب وہ اس کی بھیجی ہوئی تنبیہات سے آنکھیں بند کر کے اپنی غلط روی پر اصرار کیے چلی جاتی ہیں تو آخر کار انہیں تباہی کے گڑھے میں پھینک دیتا ہے“²¹¹۔

DESTRUCTION OF THE PEOPLE OF HUD

The Holy Quran says : “So we delivered him and those with him by mercy from Us, and We cut off the roots of those who rejected Our messages and were not believers” (7 : 72).

The earliest commentator of the Holy Quran, Ibn Abbas explains it as follows :

”ای استا صلنا الذین کذبوا بکتابنا و رسولنا هود“²¹²۔

The celebrated commentator, al-Tabari, discussing the end of the people of Hud, cites its interpretation as follows :

”و اهلکنا الذین کذبوا من قوم هود بحججنا جميعاً عن اخرهم فلم نبق منهم احدا“²¹³۔

al-Farra al-Baghwi explains it :

”ای استا صلناهم و اهلکناهم عن اخرهم“²¹⁴۔

al-Zamakhshari, giving a detailed account of the end of Ad, the people of Hud, remarks :

”فجاءتهم منها ریح عقیم فاهلکتهم و نجا هود و المؤمنون معه. فاتوا مكة فعبدوا الله فيها حتى ما توا“²¹⁵۔

The great scholar al-Razi explains it and regards this destruction to be a miracle of Hud :

”و قطعنا دابر الذین کذبوا بالایات التي جعلناها معجزة لهود. و المراد انه تعالى الزل عليهم عذاب الاستئصال الذي هو الريح. . . انه تعالى ما ابقى منهم احدا“²¹⁶۔

al-Qurtabi,²¹⁷ al-Baidawi,²¹⁸ al-Tabarsi,²¹⁹ al-Khazin,²²⁰ Abu Hayyan,²²¹ Ibn Kathir,²²² al-Mahalli²²³ and al-Alusi²²⁴ explain it in the same manner.

Allama al-Suyuti has explained it somewhat in detail :

”فاوحى الله الى هود ان يعتزل بمن معه من المؤمنین فی حظيرة فانتزلوا و خط عليهم خطا و اقبلت الريح فكانت لا تدخل حظيرة هود ولا تجاوز الخط انما يدخل عليهم ما تلذبه انفسهم و تلین علیه الجلود و انها لتمر من عاد بالظعن بين السماء و الارض و تدمغهم بالحجارة و اوحى الله الى الحيات و العنقادات ان تاخذ عليهم الطرق فلم تدع عادياً يجاوزهم“²²⁵۔

Shah Waliullah, the great scholar, translates (7 : 72) and conveys the full explanation :

”پس نجات دادیم او را و کسانى را که با او بودند بمهربانى از جانب خویش و بریدیم بیخ اناکه دروغ میداشتند آیات مارا“²²⁶۔

al-Tantawi, discussing the destruction of the people of Hud, points out a moral lesson for the Muslims who are west-addict :

”فیظن اهل الشرق ان هذا الغربى نعمة علیه لغناه و جاهه اذا هو كالسحابة السوداء كثيرة الماء فاذا دخلوا بلادهم انقلبوا علیهم ناراً و سعيراً فانبزوا اموالهم“²²⁷۔

Rashid Raza, who sometimes minimises the miraculous element here remarks on the cause of destructions of various people of various prophets :

”فيردون دعوتهم كبرا و عنادا فى الجحود و يقترحون عليهم الايات فيعطونها مع انذارهم بالهلاك اذالم يؤمنوا بها فيكذبون فيهلكون و بهذاهلك اقوام نوح و عاد و ثمود و فرعون و اخوان لوط و غيرهم و هذا النوع من الهلاك خاصا باقوام الرسل اولى الدعوة الخاصة لا قوامهم“²²⁸۔

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PEOPLE OF SALEH

The Holy Quran says : “So the earthquake seized and they were motionless bodies in their abodes” (7 : 78).

Ibn Abbas, explaining it says :

”فاخذتهم الرجفة) الزلزلة و الصيحة بالعباب (فاصبحوا فى دارهم) فصاروا فى مدينتهم (جاثمين ميتين لا يتحركون)²²⁹۔“

The celebrated commentator, al-Tabari, explaining it states :

”انما عنى ب ”الرجفة“ ههنا الصيحة التى زعزعتهم و حركتهم للهلاك لان ثمود هلكت بالصيحة. فيما ذكر اهل العلم“²³⁰۔

al-Baghwi explains it in the same manner :

”الرجفة وهى زلزلة الارض و حركتها و اهلكوا بالصيحة و الرجفة“²³¹۔

al-Zamakhshari tries to determine the day of destruction :

”و روى ان عقربهم الناقة كان يوم الاربعاء و نزل بهم العذاب يوم السبت“²³²۔

The great scholar, al-Razi, regards it a miracle :

”اما الرجفة فهى الزلزلة فى الارض. وهى حركة خارجة عن المعتاد“²³³۔

al-Qurtabi,²³⁴ al-Baidawi,²³⁵ al-Nasafi,²³⁶ al-Khazin,²³⁷ Abu Hayyan,²³⁸ Ibn Kathir,²³⁹ al-Mahalli,²⁴⁰ al-Suyuti,²⁴¹ Tabarsi,²⁴² all of them explain the destruction of the people of Saleh.

Shah Waliullah translates (7 : 78) as follows :

”پس درگرفت ایشانرا زلزله پس گشتند مرده بزانو افتاده در سرائے خویش“²⁴³۔

al-Shaukani,²⁴⁴ al-Alusi²⁴⁵, al-Tantawi,²⁴⁶ Shah Abdul Qadir,²⁴⁷ Daryabadi,²⁴⁸ Usmani²⁴⁹ and Maudoodi²⁵⁰ explain the verse in the same manner.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PEOPLE OF LOT

The Holy Quran says : “And we rained upon them a rain. See, then, what was the end of the guilty” (7 : 84).

Ibn Abbas explaining it depicts the destruction of the people of Lot as follows :

”و امطرنا عليهم) انزلنا على مسافيرهم و شد اذهم (مطرا) حجارة من السماء (فانظر) يا محمد (كيف كان عاقبة المجرمين) صار اخره امر المشركين بالهلاك“²⁵¹۔

The celebrated commentator al-Tabari, discussing it states :

”يقول تعالى ذكره - و امطرنا على قوم لوط الذين كذبوا لوطا و لم يؤمنوا به. مطرا من حجارة سجيل اهلكنا هم به“²⁵²۔

al-Zamakhshari, explaining the verse like Ibn Abbas, cites a wonderful event connected with the destruction of the people of Lot :

”وروى ان تاجرا منهم كان فى الحرم فوقف له الحجر اربعين يوما حتى قضى تجارته و خرج من الحرم فوقع عليه“²⁵³۔

al-Razi, explains it as follows :

”و المراد انه تعالى امطر عليهم حجارة من السماء بدليل انه تعالى قال فى اية اخرى (و امطرنا عليهم حجارة من سجيل)“²⁵⁴۔

al-Qurtabi, gives some details :

”سرى لوط باهله كما وصف الله (يقطع من الليل) ثم امر جبريل عليه السلام فادخل جناحه تحت مدائنهم فاقتلعها و رفعها حتى سمع اهل السماء صياح الديكة و نباح الكلاب ثم جعل عاليها سافلها و امطرت عليهم حجارة من سجيل“²⁵⁵۔

al-Baidawi,²⁵⁶ al-Nasafi,²⁵⁷ al-Khazin,²⁵⁸ Abu Hayyan,²⁵⁹ Ibn Kathir,²⁶⁰ al-Mahalli,²⁶¹ al-Suyuti,²⁶² al-Tabarsi,²⁶³ all of them explain the destruction of the people of Lot. The great Indian scholar, Shah Waliullah, translates the verse to convey its full meaning as explained by his predecessors :

”و بارانيديم بر ايشان بارانى يعنى از سنگ. پس بنگر چگونه بود آخر کار گنهگاران“²⁶⁴۔

al-Shaukani remarks that this destruction was quite an unaccustomed one :

”و المعنى هنا ان الله امطر عليهم مطرا غير ما يعتادونه و هورميهم بالحجارة“²⁶⁵۔

al-Alusi,²⁶⁶ al-Tantawi, Shah²⁶⁷ Abdul Qadir²⁶⁸ Daryabadi²⁶⁹ Maudoodi²⁷⁰ & Usmani,²⁷¹ all explain it like their predecessors and explain the destruction of the people of Lot by Divine help.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PEOPLE OF SHUAIB

The Holy Quran says : “So the earthquake overtook them, and they were mentionless bodies in their abode” (7 : 91).

The earliest commentator, Ibn Abbas, explains it as follows :

”فاخذتهم الرجفة) الزلزلة والصيحة بالعذاب (فاصبحوا فى دارهم) فصاروا فى مدينتهم و عساكرهم (جائمين) ميتين (الذين كذبوا شعيبا هلكوا)“²⁷²۔

The celebrated commentator, al-Tabari explains it :

”يقول - فاخذت الذين كفروا من قوم شعيب الرجفة . . . و انها الزلزلة“²⁷³۔

al-Baghwi states :

”الهيهم الله نارا ورجفت بهم الارض فاحترقوا كما يحترق الجراد المقتلى و صاروا رمادا“²⁷⁴ -

al-Zamakhshari remarks :

”الذين كذبوا شعيبا هم المخصوصون بان اهلكوا و استنصروا كان لم يقيموا في دارهم“²⁷⁵ -

The great scholar al-Razi says :

”كان الهلاك اعظم. لانه احاطه بهم العذاب من فوقهم و من تحت ارجلهم“²⁷⁶ -

al-Qurtabi,²⁷⁷ al-Baidawi,²⁷⁸ al-Nasafi,²⁷⁹ al-Khazin,²⁸⁰ all of the explain it in the like manner.

Abu Hayyan says :

”(الذين كذبوا شعيبا كان لم يغنوا فيها) اي كان لم يقيموا ناعمى البال رخي العيش في دارهم و فيها قوة الاخبار عن هلاكهم و حلول المكروه بهم و التنبيه على الاعتبار بهم“²⁸¹ -

Ibn Kathir,²⁸² al-Mahalli,²⁸³ al-Suyuti,²⁸⁴ al-Tabarsi²⁸⁵, explain this event in the like manner.

Shah Waliullah explains it as follows :

”پس در گرفت ایشانرا زلزله پس صبح کردند در سرائے خویش مرده بر زانو افتاده“²⁸⁶ -

al-Shaukani remarks :

لان الله سبحانه استنصروا بالعذاب“²⁸⁷ -

al-Alusi quotes Ibn Abbas and narrates the story of their destruction²⁸⁸.

al-Tantawi says :

”و اما اهل مدين فاخذتهم الرجفة صاح بهم جبريل صيحة فهلكوا جميعاً“²⁸⁹ -

Rashid Raza's explaining of the verse is quite orthodox :

”و المعنى فاخذتهم الزلزلة فاصبحوا في دارهم باركين على ركبهم او منكبين على وجوههم ميتين“²⁹⁰ -

Shah Abdul Qadir translates it as follows :

”پھر پکڑا اونکو زلزله نے پھر صبح کورہ گئے اپنے گھر میں اوندھے پڑے“²⁹¹ -

Daryabadi²⁹², Maudoodi²⁹³ and Usmani²⁹⁴, explain this verse in the same traditional way, detailing the destruction of the people of Shoaib.

MIRACLE OF ROD OF MOSES

The Holy Quran says : “He said : If thou hast come with a sign, produce it, if thou art truthful. So he threw his rod, then Lo ! it was a serpent manifest” (7 : 106-107).

Ibn Abbas, explaining it, tells :

”قال ان كنت جئت باية) بعلامة (فات بها ان كنت من الصادقين) بانك رسول (فالقى عصاه) اول اية (فاذا هي ثعبان مبین) حية صقراء ذكر اعظم الحيات“²⁹⁵-

The great scholar, al-Tabari, explains it as follows :

”فاذا هي ثعبان مبین) يعنى حية ”مبین“ يقول- تتبين لمن يراها انها حية“²⁹⁶-

He depicts the disturbance felt by Pharaoh, quoting a narration from al-Sadee (السدی) :

”فلما رهاذعر منها و وثب فاحدث ولم يكن يحدث قبل ذلك و صاح يا موسى خذها و انا مومن بك و ارسل معك بنى اسرائيل- فاخذها موسى فعادت عصا“²⁹⁷-

al-Baghwi states :

”قال ابن عباس والسدى انه لما القى العصا صارت حية عظيمة . . . فاخذها موسى فعاد عصا كما كانت“²⁹⁸-

al-Zamakhshari explains it :

”(ثعبان مبین) ظاهر امره لا يشك فى انه ثعبان“²⁹⁹-

And he repeats the same story as told by al-Tabari.

The great theologian and commentator, al-Razi states :

”اعلم ان فرعون لما طالب موسى عليه السلام باقامه البينة على صحة نبوته بين الله تعالى ان معجزته كانت قلب العصا ثعبانا و اظهار اليد البيضاء“³⁰⁰-

The great scholar, very scholastically, discusses the possibility of miracles and refuting the argument of those who consider miracles incredible, concludes :

”و اذا كان كذلك كان انقلاب العصا ثعبانا امرا ممكنا لذاته و ثبت انه تعالى قادر على جميع الامكنات“³⁰¹-

al-Qurtabi explains it :

”(مبین) اى حية لا لبس فيها“³⁰²-

He has further depicted the event which took place between Moses and the enchanters and points out their fraud :

”و قيل- كان ما القوا حبالا من ادم فيها زئبق فتحركت و قالوا هذه حيات“³⁰³-

al-Baidawi, further, verifies it :

”الق عصاك . . . فصارت حية . . . انها لما تلقفت حبالهم و عصيهم و ابتلعته باسرها اقبلت على الحاضرين فهربوا و ازدحموا حتى هلك جمع عظيم ثم اخذها موسى فصارت عصا كما كانت فقال السحرة لو كان هذا سحر لبقيت حبالنا و عصينا“³⁰⁴-

al-Nasafi explains it :

”(ثعبان) حية عظيمة (مبین) ظاهر امره“³⁰⁵-

Allama al-Khazin has explained it in the same manner and has cited three arguments :

”و في كون الثعبان مبيناً وجوه - الاول انه تميز وتبين ذلك عما عملته السحرة من التمويه والتليس و بذلك تتميز معجزات الانبياء عليهم الصلاة والسلام عن تمويه السحر وتخيلهم - الوجه الثاني انهم شاهدوا العصا قد انقلبت حية ولم يشبهه ذلك عليهم فلذلك قال ثعبان مبين اي بين - الوجه الثالث ان ذلك الثعبان لما كان معجزة لموسى عليه الصلاة والسلام كان من اعظم الايات التي ابانت صدق قول موسى عليه الصلاة والسلام في انه رسول من رب العالمين“³⁰⁶ -

Abu Hayyan argues on the point why Moses performed his miracle of rod first of all.

”بدا بالعصا دون سائر المعجزات لانها معجزة تحتوى على معجزات كثيرة“³⁰⁷ -

Ibn Kathir³⁰⁸, al-Mahalli³⁰⁹, al-Suyuti³¹⁰, al-Tabarsi³¹¹, all explain it in the like manner. Shah Waliullah translates this verse as follows :

”(فرعون) گفت اگر آورده معجزه پس حاضر کن آنرا اگر هستی از راست گویان - پس انداخت عصائی خود را پس ناگهان آن عصا ازدها ظاهر شده“³¹² -

al-Shaukani³¹³, al-Alusi³¹⁴ al-Tantawi³¹⁵, Shah Abdul Qadir³¹⁶, Maudoodi³¹⁷ and Usmani³¹⁸ all explain it in the same manner.

Daryabadi has nicely pointed out here the confused narration of the Bible : “Wrong and confused as usual, the Bible attributes this miracle, when performed before Pharaoh, not to Moses but to Aaron”³¹⁹.

Rashid Raza also admits the credibility of this miracle :

”ای فلم یلبث موسى ان الفی عصاه التي كانت بيمينه امام فرعون فاذا هی ثعبان و هو الذکر العظیم من الحیات - مبین ای ظاهر بین لا خفاء فی كونه ثعبانا حقیقيا یسعی“³²⁰ -

He further says that we are incapable of understanding its reality :

”وكل ما فی الامر ان عصا موسى ازلت هذا التخيل بسرعة و هو معنى الملف و لكن لا نعلم بما ذا كان لها هذا التأثير لانها اية الهية حقیقية لا امر صناعی حتى نعرف صنعة و حقیقته“³²¹ -

MOSES' MIRACLE OF RADIANT HAND

The Holy Quran says : “And he drew forth his hand, and Lo ! it was white to the beholders (7 : (108).

Ibn Abbas explains it as follows :

”(و نزع يده) من ابطه (فاذا هی بیضاء) تضئى (للاظرین) اليها“³²² -

al-Tabari explains it as follows :

”و اخرج يده. فاذا هي بيضاء و تلوح لمن نظر اليها من الناس“³²⁸۔

al-Baghwi interprets it :

”فاذا هي بيضاء لها شعاع غلب نور الشمس“³²⁴۔

al-Zamakhshari tells :

”ثم ادخلها جيبه و اعياه مدرعة صوف و نزعها فاذا هي بيضاء نورانيا غلب شعاعها شعاع الشمس. و كان موسى ادم شديد الادمة“³²⁵۔

The great scholar, al-Razi explains it in the same way and strongly refutes the arguments of those who consider that both the miracles mentioned here were meant metaphorically to denote that the arguments of Moses were too strong to be shaken. He rejects it and regards such exegesis to be blesphemy :

”و اعلم ان حمل هذين المعجزين على هذا الوجه يجرى مجرى دفع التواتر و تكذيب الله و رسوله“³²⁶۔

He further strengthens the credibility of these miracles and states that when the magicians flung themselves prostrate it is a clear argument of its credibility :

”انهم لما شاهدوا الايات العظيمة و المعجزات القاهرة. لم يتمالكوا ان وقعوا ساجدين“³²⁷۔

al-Qurtabi explains :

”و نزع يده) اي اخرجها و اظهرها اي من غير برص و كان موسى اسمر شديد السمرة ثم اعاد يده الى جيبه فعادت الى لونها الاول“³²⁸۔

al-Baidawi says :

”و نزع يده . . . من جيبه او من تحت ابطه فاذا هي بيضا . . . اي بيضاء بيضا خارجا عن العادة . . . فاذا هي بيضاء نورانية غلب شعاعها شعاع الشمس“³²⁹۔

al-Nasafi argues :

”اي فاذا هي بيضاء للنظارة و لاتكون بيضاء للنظارة الا اذا كان بيضا عجيبا خارجا عن العادة يجمع الناس للنظر اليه“³³⁰۔

Allama al-Khazin³³¹, Abu Hayyan³³², Ibn Kathir³³³, al-Mahalli³³⁴, al-Suyuti³³⁵, al-Tabarsi³³⁶ all explain this verse in the same way.

Shah Waliullah translates it as follows :

”و بيرون آورد دست خود را پس ناگهان ان دست نوراني شد برائے بينندگان“³³⁷۔

al-Shaukani explains it :

”فاذا يده التي اخرجها بيضاء تتلا لاء نورا يظهر لكل مبصر“³³⁸۔

al-Alusi³³⁹, al-Tantawi³⁴⁰, Rashid Raza³⁴¹ and Shah Abdul Qadir³⁴² all explain it in the same manner. Maulana Maudoodi, discussing the miracles of Moses, answers the rejectors of miracles :

”یہ دو نشانیاں حضرت موسیٰ کو اس امر کے ثبوت میں دی گئی تھیں کہ وہ اس خدا کے نمائندے ہیں جو کائنات کا خالق اور فرماں روا ہے۔۔۔ پیغمبروں نے جب کبھی اپنے آپ کو فرستادہ رب العالمین کی حیثیت سے پیش کیا تو لوگوں نے ان سے یہی مطالبہ کیا کہ اگر تم واقعی رب العالمین کے نمائندے ہو تو تمہارے ہاتھوں سے کوئی ایسا واقعہ ظہور میں آنا چاہیے جو قوانین فطرت کی عام روش سے ہٹا ہوا ہو اور جس سے صاف ظاہر ہو رہا ہو کہ رب العالمین نے تمہاری صداقت ثابت کرنے کے لیے اپنی براہ راست مداخلت سے یہ واقعہ نشانی کے طور پر صادر کیا ہے۔۔۔ ایسے نشانات یا معجزات کو جو لوگ قوانین فطرت کے تحت صادر ہونے والے عام واقعات قرار دینے کی کوشش کرتے ہیں - وہ درحقیقت کتاب اللہ کو ماننے اور نہ ماننے کے درمیان ایک ایسا موقف اختیار کرتے ہیں جو کسی طرح معقول نہیں سمجھا جا سکتا۔ اس لیے کہ قرآن جس جگہ صریح طور پر خارق عادت واقعہ کا ذکر کر رہا ہو وہاں سیاق و سباق کے بالکل خلاف ایک عادی واقعہ بنانے کی جدوجہد ایک بھونڈی سخن سازی ہے جس کی ضرورت صرف ان لوگوں کو پیش آتی ہے جو ایک طرف تو کسی ایسی کتاب پر ایمان نہیں لانا چاہتے جو خارق عادت واقعات کا ذکر کرتی ہو اور دوسری طرف آبائی مذاہب کے پیدائشی معتقد ہونے کی وجہ سے اس کتاب کا انکار بھی نہیں کرنا چاہتے“³⁴³۔

MIRACULOUS BIRTH OF JESUS

The Holy Quran says : “She said : My Lord, how can I have a son and man has not yet touched me? He said : Even so ; Allah creates what He pleases. When He decrees a matter, He only says it, Be, and it is” (3 : 46). “The likeness of Jesus with Allah is truly the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, Be, and he was” (3 : 59).

Ibn Abbas, explaining the miraculous birth of Jesus, tells :

”(ان مثل عیسیٰ) تخلق عیسیٰ (عند اللہ) بلا اب (کمثل ادم خلقه من تراب بلا اب وام) ثم قال له) لعیسیٰ (کن فیکون) ولدا بلا اب (الحق) هو الخیر الحق (من ربک) ان عیسیٰ لم یکن اللہ ولا ولده ولا شریکة (فلاتکن من الممترین) من الشاکین فیما بینت لک من تخلق عیسیٰ بلا اب“³⁴⁴۔

al-Tabari discussing the miraculous birth of Jesus explains :

”هكذا یخلق اللہ منک ولدا لک من غیر ان یمسک بشر. فیجعلہ ایة للناس و عبرة. فانه یخلق ما یشاء و یصنع ما یرید. . . و یحرم ذالک من یشاء من النساء و ان کانت ذات بعل“³⁴⁵۔

al-Baghwi explains (19 : 17) as follows :

”هو علیٰ هین ای خلق ولد بلا اب . . . قیل ان جبریل رفع درعها فنفض فی جیبها فحملت حین لبست وقیل نفخ جبرائیل علیہ السلام نفخا من بعید فوصل الريح الیها فحملت بعیسی فی الحال“³⁴⁶۔

al-Zamakhshari, strongly argues to prove the miraculous birth of Jesus. He points out two other miracles mentioned in the Quran in its support :

”فان قلت - ما كان حزنها لفقد الطعام و الشراب حتى تسلى بالسرى و الرطب ؟ قلت لم تقع السلية بهما من حيث انهما طعام و شراب. و لكن من حيث انهما معجزتان تريان الناس انها من اهل العصمة و البعد من الريبة و ان مثلها مما قرفوها بمعزل. و ان لها امور الهية خارجة عن العادات خارقة لما القوا و اعتادوا حتى يتبين لهم ان ولادها من غير فحل ليس ببدع من شأنها“³⁴⁷ -

He further points out Jesus's speaking in the cradle :

”و عن السدى - لما اشارت اليه غضبوا و قالوا - لمسخريتها بنا اشد علينا من زناها و روى انه كان يرضع. فلما سمع ذلك ترك الرضاع و اقبل عليهم بوجهه . . . و قيل كلمهم بذلك ثم لم يتكلم حتى بلغ يتكلم فيه الصبيان. . . انطقه الله اولا بانه عبد الله ردا لقول النصارى“³⁴⁸ -

al-Razi, discussing the miraculous birth of Jesus, and quoting various opinions about the period of pregnancy of Maryam, opines that it happened all at once :

”ان الله تعالى قال في وصفه (ان مثل عيسى عند الله كمثل ادم خلقه من تراب ثم قال له كن فيكون) فثبت ان عيسى عليه السلام كما قال الله تعالى له (كن فيكون) و هذا مما لا يتصور فيه مدة الحمل و انما تعقل تلك المدة في حق من يتولد من النطفة“³⁴⁹ -

al-Qurtabi follows the explanation of Ibn 'Abbās and remarks :

”ان هذا من الامور الخارقة للعادة التي لله تعالى فيها مراد عظيم“³⁵⁰ -

al-Baidawi, explaining (19 : 17) says :

”فحملته . . . بان نفخ في درعها . . . اية للناس . . . علامة لهم و برهاننا على كمال قدرتنا“³⁵¹ -

al-Nasafi, explains it as follows :

”(هين) اى اعطاء الولد بلا اب على سهل . . . اى لنبين به قدرتنا و لنجعل اية للناس اى عبرة و برهاننا على قدرتنا“³⁵² -

Allama al-Khazin, has followed the exegesis of al-Razi and concluded :

” . . . فوصل النفخ اليها فحملت بعيسى في الحال“³⁵³ -

Abu Hayyan points out the link between the stories of Zacharias and Mary narrated adjacently :

”انه تعالى لما ذكر قصة زكريا و طلبه الولد و اجابة الله اياه. فولد له من شيخ فان و عجوز له عاتر و كان ذلك مما يتعجب منه اردفه بما هو اعظم في الغرابة و العجب و هو وجود ولد من غير ذكر فدل ذلك على عظم قدرة الله و حكمة“³⁵⁴ -

Ibn Kathir, like his predecessors, points out the miraculous birth of Jesus and states that the angel was Gabriel :

”فذكر غير واحد من علماء السلف ان الملك هو جبرائيل عليه السلام . . . فحملت بالولد باذن الله تعالى“³⁵⁵ -

al-Mahalli explains 19 : 17 as such :

”قال الامر كذلك من خلق غلام منك من غير اب . . .“³⁵⁶ -

al-Suyuti points out that after this miraculous pregnancy, Mary felt ashamed so much that she went to East, it may be (Bethlehem, generally accepted birth place of Jesus, shifting from her native place Nazareth) :

”وجعت ما يجع النساء وكانت في بيت النبوة فاستحيت وهربت حياء من قومها فاخذت نحو المشرق“³⁵⁷ -

al-Tabarasi, discussing the miraculous birth of Jesus, deduces that the miracles are not peculiar with prophets only but may be performed by others than prophets also :

”وفي هذه الايات دلالة على جواز اظهار المعجزات لغير الانبياء لان من المعلوم ان مريم ليست بنبوة. وان روية الملك على صورة البشر. و بشارة الملك اياها و ولادتها من غير وطى الى غيرها من الايات التي اتاها الله بها من اكبر المعجزات“³⁵⁸ -

Allama Abu Saud, very scholastically differentiates between ”يفعل ما يشاء“ (3 : 40) and ”يخلق ما يشاء“ (3 : 47) as follows :

”ان ايراد يخلق ههنا مكان يفعل هناك لما ان ولادة العذراء من غير ان يمسه بشر ابداع و اغرب من ولادة عجوز عاقر من شيخ فان مكان الخلق المنبثى عن الاختراع انسب بهذا المقام من مطلق الفعل“³⁵⁹ -

Shah Waliullah's translation of 19 : 17-30 is very clear on the miraculous birth of Jesus :

”گفت جز اين نيست كه من فرستاده پروردگار ام تا عطا كنم ترا طفلى ها كيزه گفت چگونه پيدا شود برائى من طفلى و دست نرسانيده است بمن هيچ آدمى و هرگز نبودم زنا كار گفت وعده هم چنين است. فرمود پروردگار تو كه اين بر من آسان است و ميخواهيم كه كنيم اين طفل را نشانه برائى مردمان و بخشائشى از جانب خود و هست اين مقدمه كارى مقرر کرده شده . پس بشكم بار گرفت آن طفل را پس بك سو شد مريم بسبب آن حملى بجائى دور از مردم . . . پس مريم اشارت كرد بطفل خود گفتند چگونه سخن گويم با كسيكه هست در گهواره كودك گفت عيسى من بنده خدا ام“³⁶⁰ -

al-Shaukani explains it in the same way :

”اي و لنجعل هذا الغلام او خلقه من غير اب اية للناس يستدلون بها على كمال القدرة . . . فاطمانت الى قوله فدنا منها فنفخ فى جيب در عها“³⁶¹ -

al-Tantawi explains :

” . . . هين) اي خلق ولدك بلا اب“³⁶² -

He further regards the virgin birth of Jesus as an established fact accepted and believed by Muslims and Christians both :

”عيسى ابن مريم ليس له اب و هذه قضية العالم اجمعه يؤمن بها المسلم و النصراني“³⁶³ -

al-Tantawi, very scholastically cites scientific arguments and gives examples of various plants, flowers, bees and iusects where there is absolutely no mention of father or mother and they grow and everybody acknowledges their existence :

”انظر كيف القحتها الرياح الهابات فحملت اللقاح من الازهار المذكرة الى الازهار المؤنثة فحملت و اخرجت ثمرا - فهنا لم يقصد الذكر الانثى و ليس لاحد هما شهوة و لاحياة معروفة و لازواج و لا عشق و لا غرام. بل هناك رياح هبت فاخذت من هذا و اعطت ذالك و الرياح لا عقل لها و لا علم“³⁶⁴ -

He, as usual, regards this event to be a gate of scientific knowledge and intellectual advancement :

”اليس ذكر مسألة مريم و عيسى فتعا لباب العلم على مصراعيه بل باب الرحمة و باب الحكمة و باب الرقى العلمى“³⁶⁵ -

Rashid Raza, too, cites scientific arguments on the miraculous birth of Jesus :

”و اقول - اعلم ان الكافرين بايات الله ينكرون العمل بعيسى من غير اب جمودا على العادات و ذهولا عن كيفيته ابتداء خلق جميع المخلوقات و لو كان لهم دليل عقلى على استحالة ذالك لكانوا معذورين و لكن لا دليل لهم الا ان هذا غير معتاد“ -

”و نحن نرى علماء المغرب و فلاسفته متفقين على امكان التولد الذاتى اى تولد الحيوان من غير حيوان او من الجماد. و هم يبحثون و يحاولون ان يصلوا الى ذالك يتجاريبهم. و اذا كان تولد الحيوان من الجماد جائزا فتولد الحيوان من حيوان واحد اولى با لجواز و اقرب الى الحصول. نعم انه خلاف الاصل و ان كونه جائزا لا يقتضى وقوعه. بالفعل و نحن لستدل على وقوعه بالفعل بخبر الوحي الذى قام الدليل على صدقه“³⁶⁶ -

He further argues and concludes :

”فنعول - ان الله المسخر للارواح المنبثه فى الكائنات قد ارسل روحا من عنده الى مريم فتمثل لها بشرا و نفخ فيها - فاحدثت نفخته التلقيح فى رحمها فحملت بعيسى عليه السلام“³⁶⁷ -

The miraculous birth of Jesus is told by Shah Abdul Qadir as such :

”نشانى لوگوں کو يعنى بن باپ کا لڑکا پیدا ہو گیا - الله کی قدرت ہے“³⁶⁸ -

Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi mentions the miracle of virgin birth of Jesus and the charges of Jews on Mary :

”This is to refute the most vulgar charge of the Jews that she led an immoral lifethis miracle of virgin birth“³⁶⁹ .

Maulana Thanvi, explains the miraculous birth of Jesus :

”تمہارے رب نے ارشاد فرمایا ہے کہ یہ بات (کہ بلا اسباب عادیہ پیدا کر دوں) مجھ کو آسان ہے اور (یہ بھی فرمایا ہے کہ ہم بلا اسباب عادیہ کے اس طرز پر اس لیے پیدا کریں گے تاکہ ہم اس فرزند کو لوگوں کے (استدلال علی القدرۃ الالہیہ کے) لیے ایک نشانی (قدرت کی) بنا دیں اور (نیز اس کے ذریعے سے لوگوں کے ہدایت پانے کے لیے اس کو) باعث رحمت بنائیں اور یہ (بے باپ کے اس بچہ کا پیدا ہونا) ایک طے شدہ بات ہے جو ضرور ہوگی“ 370۔

Usmani regards the coming of Gabriel in the shape of a handsome youthful man to be trial of Mary for her chastity :

”اور ممکن ہے کہ یہاں حضرت مریم کی انتہائی عفت و پاکبازی کا امتحان بھی مقصود ہو کہ ایسے زبردست دواعی و محرکات بھی اس کے جذبات عفاف و تقویٰ کو ادنیٰ ترین جنبش نہ دے سکے“ 371۔

Maulana Maudoodi, discussing in detail the miraculous birth of Jesus, refutes those who reject it :

”پس جو لوگ قرآن کو کلام اللہ مانتے ہیں اور پھر مسیح علیہ السلام کے متعلق یہ بھی ثابت کرنے کی کوشش کرتے ہیں کہ ان کی ولادت حسب معمول باپ اور ماں کے اتصال سے ہوئی تھی وہ دراصل ثابت یہ کرتے ہیں کہ اللہ تعالیٰ اظہار ما فی الضمیر اور بیان مدعا کی اتنی قدرت بھی نہیں رکھتا جتنی خود یہ حضرات رکھتے ہیں (معاذ اللہ)“ 372۔

Explaining اية للنلس (19 : 21), he remarks :

”یہ ہے وہ ”نشانی“ جو حضرت عیسیٰ کی ذات میں بنی اسرائیل کے سامنے پیش کی گئی۔ اللہ تعالیٰ بنی اسرائیل کو ان کی مسلسل بدکرداریوں پر عبرت ناک سزا دینے سے پہلے ان پر حجت تمام کرنا چاہتا تھا۔ اس کے لیے اس نے یہ تدبیر فرمائی کہ بنی ہارون کی ایک ایسی زاہدہ و عابدہ لڑکی کو جو بیت المقدس میں معتکف اور حضرت زکریا کے زہر تربیت تھی دوشیزگی کی حالت میں حاملہ کر دیا تاکہ جب وہ بچہ لیے ہوئے آئے تو ماری قوم میں ہیجان برپا ہو جائے اور لوگوں کی توجہات یکاخت اس پر مرکوز ہو جائیں پھر اس تدبیر کے نتیجے میں جب ایک ہجوم حضرت مریم پر ٹوٹ پڑا تو اللہ تعالیٰ نے اس نوزائیدہ بچے سے کلام کرایا تاکہ جب یہی بچہ بڑا ہو کر نبوت کے منصب پر سرفراز ہو تو قوم میں ہزاروں آدمی اس امر کی شہادت دینے والے موجود رہیں کہ اس کی شخصیت میں وہ اللہ تعالیٰ کا ایک حیرت انگیز معجزہ دیکھ چکے ہیں“ 373۔

FIRE MIRACULOUSLY CEASED ON ABRAHAM :

The Holy Quran says : “They said : Burn him, and help your gods, if you are going to do (anything). We said : O fire! be coolness and peace for Abraham” (21:69).

Ibn Abbas explains 21 : 69 as follows :

”... (کونی برداً) باردة من حرق (و سلاماً) سلیمة من البرد (علی ابراہیم) و لولم یقل سلاماً لاحرقہ البرد“ 374۔

The celebrated commentator, al-Tabari, explains, 21 : 69 as such :

”قال - فجسوه فى بيت. وجمعوا له خطبا. حتى ان كانت المرأة لتعرض فتقول - لئن عافانى الله لا جمن خطبا لا ابراهيم. فلما جمعوا له واكثروا من الخطب. حتى ان الطير لتمر بها فتحرق من شدة وهجها. فعمدوا اليه فرفعوه على راس البنيان. فرفع ابراهيم صلى الله عليه وسلم راسه الى السماء فقالت السماء و الارض و الجبال و الملائكة - ربنا. ابراهيم يحرق فيك فقال - انا اعلم به و ان دعاكم فاغيثوه. و قال ابراهيم حين رفع راسه الى السماء - اللهم انت الواحد فى السماء... 375 -

al-Tabari, quoting various sources, further explains the occurrence of this miracle :

”وقال ابن عباس - لولم يتبع بردها سلا ما لمت ابراهيم من شدة بردها. حدثنى ابراهيم بن المقدم ابو الاشعث. قال - ثنا المعتمر قال - سمعت ابي قال ثنا قتاده. عن ابي سليمان. عن كعب. قال - ما احترقت النار من ابراهيم الا و ثاقه“ 376 -

al-Baghwi has explained it in the same way as al-Tabari³⁷⁷.

al-Zamakhshari follows al-Tabari in detail and states :

”كادت الطير تحترق فى الجومن و هجها. ثم وضعوه فى المنجنيق مقيدا مغلولا فرموا به فيها. فنادها جبريل عليه السلام (يا نار كونى برداً و سلاماً) و يحكى ما احترقت منه الا و ثاقه“ 378 -

Answering a question how the fire ceased being a fire, he argues :

”فان قلت - كيف بردت النار وهى نار ؟ قلت - نزع الله عنها طبعها الذى طبعها عليه من الحر و الاحراق و ابقاها على الاضاءة و الاشتعال كما كانت و الله على كل شئ قدير و يجوز ان يدفع بقدرته عن جسم ابراهيم عليه السلام اذى حرها و يذيقه فيها عكس ذلك“ 379 -

al-Razi follows al-Zamakhshari and adds :

”ان الله تعالى ازال عنهما ما فيها من الحر و الاحراق و ابقى ما فيه من الاضاءة و الاشراق و الله على كل شئ قدير“ -

ان الله تعالى خلق فى جسم ابراهيم كيفية مانعة من وصول اذى النار اليه. كما يفعل بخزنة جهنم فى الآخرة -

انه سبحانه خلق بينه و بين النار حائلا يمنع من وصول اثر النار اليه“ 380 -

Citing these three arguments, he concludes :

”قال المحققون و الاول اولى لان الظاهر قوله (يا نار كونى برداً) ان نفس النار صارت باردة حتى سلم ابراهيم من تأثيرها“ 381 -

al-Qurtabi, explaining 21 : 69 concludes :

”لم تحرق النار من ابراهيم الا و ثاقه“ 382 -

Allama al-Baidawi, giving details of the miracle, says :

”فرموا به فيها فقال له جبريل هل لك حاجة فقال اما اليك فلا فقال فاسئال ربك و قال حسبي من سئوالى علمه بهعالى فجعل الله ببركة قوله الحظيرة روضة و لم يحترق منه الا و ثاقه“ 383 -

He further argues :

”وانقلاب النار هواء طيبة ليس ببدع غير انه هكذا خلاف المعتاد فهو اذن من معجزاته عليه السلام وقيل كانت النار بحالها لكنة تعالى دفع عنه اذاها“³⁸⁴۔

al-Nasafi explains it in the same way :

”والمعنى ان الله تعالى نزع عنها طبعها الذي عليه من الحر والاحراق و ابقاها على الاضائة والاشراق“³⁸⁵۔

Allama al-Khazin, explaining this miracle, also indicates the punishment given to Namrud :

”ما احرقت النار من ابراهيم الا وثاقه . . . و دخلت في دماغه بعوصنة فاهلكته“³⁸⁶۔

Discussing the miracle of Abraham, and quoting various sources, Abu Hayyan concludes :

وقد اكثر الناس في حكاية ما جرى لابراهيم والذى صح هو ما ذكره تعالى من انه القى في النار فجعلها الله عليه بردا وسلاما و خرج منها سالما فكانت اعظم اية والظاهر ان القائل قلنا يا نار هو الله تعالى“³⁸⁷۔

Ibn Kathir, after giving detail, concludes :

”و لم يصبه منها شئ حتى اخمدها الله“³⁸⁸۔

al-Mahalli³⁸⁹, and al-Suyuti³⁹⁰, explain it in the same way.

al-Tabarsi points out that it was the first crane in the world which was used for Abraham :

”فلما ارادوا ان يلقوا ابراهيم في النار لم يدروا كيف يلقونه. فجاء ايليس فدلهم على المنجنيق وهو اول منجنيق صنعت فوضعه فيها ثم رموه . . .“³⁹¹۔

After mentioning various possibilities how Abraham was saved, he concludes :

”و على الجملة فقد علمنا ان الله سبحانه منع النار من احراقه و هو اعلم بتفاصيله“³⁹²۔

al-Tabrasi, has also indicated here a nice literary point :

”و هذا مثل فان النار جماد لا يصح خطابه. و المراد انا جعلنا النار بردا عليه و سلامة لا يصيبه من اذا هاشى. كما قال سبحانه و تعالى كونوا قردة خاسئين و المعنى انه صيرهم كذالك لا انه خاطبهم و امرهم بذالك“³⁹³۔

Shah Waliullah's translation of this verse is very clear to show its miraculous nature :

”گفتیم اے آتش سرد شو و سلامت باش بر ابراهيم“³⁹⁴۔

al-Shaukani, like others remarks :

”لو لم يتبع بردها سلاما لمات ابراهيم من بردها“³⁹⁵۔

Allama al-Alusi, follows Abu Hayyan and says :

”والذی صح ہو ما ذکرہ تعالیٰ من انہ علیہ السلام القی فی النار فجعلها اللہ تعالیٰ علیہ السلام بردا و سلاما ثم للظاہر ان اللہ تعالیٰ هو القائل لها کونی بردا“³⁹⁶۔

al-Tantawi explaining the miracle, like others, points out the moral lesson to be deduced from it that patience is rewarded :

”ان الصبر دائما یتبعہ النصر و الفوز. صبر ابراہیم فصارت النار علیہ برد او سلاما“³⁹⁷۔

Shah Abdul Qadir translates 21 : 69 as such :

”ہم نے کہا اے آگ ٹھنڈک ہو جا اور آرام ابراہیم پر“³⁹⁸۔

Daryabadi cites as follows :

”Whereupon the heat of fire miraculously ceased and the pile turned into a sort of pleasant meadow“³⁹⁹.

Maulana Thanwi tells :

”اور ان کو آتش سوزان میں ڈال دیا۔ اس وقت ہم نے آگ کہ حکم دیا کہ اے آگ تو ٹھنڈی اور بے گزند ہو جا ابراہیم کے حق میں۔۔۔ چنانچہ ایسا ہی ہو گیا“⁴⁰⁰۔

Usmani remarks :

”آگ کا ابراہیم پر ٹھنڈا ہو جانا ان کا معجزہ تھا۔ معجزہ کی حقیقت یہ ہے کہ حق تعالیٰ اپنی عام عادت کے خلاف سبب عادی کو سبب سے یا سبب اس پر مرتب نہ ہوا“⁴⁰¹۔

Maulana Maudoodi, explaining the miracles, refutes the rejectors :

”الفاظ صاف بتا رہے ہیں اور سیاق و سباق بھی اس مفہوم کی تائید کر رہا ہے کہ انہوں نے واقعی اپنے اس فیصلے پر عمل کیا ، اور جب آگ کا الاؤ تیار کر کے انہوں نے حضرت ابراہیم کو اس میں پھینکا تب اللہ تعالیٰ نے آگ کو حکم دیا کہ وہ ابراہیم کے لیے ٹھنڈی ہو جائے اور بے ضرر بن کر رہ جائے۔ پس صریح طور پر یہ بھی ان معجزات میں سے ایک ہے جو قرآن میں بیان کئے گئے ہیں۔ اگر کوئی شخص معجزات کی اس لیے تاویلین کرتا ہے کہ اس کے نزدیک خدا کے لیے بھی نظام عالم کے معمول (Routine) سے ہٹ کر کوئی غیر معمولی کام کرنا ممکن نہیں ہے تو آخر وہ خدا کو ماننے کی زحمت کیوں اٹھاتا ہے اور اگر وہ اس طرح کی تاویلین اس لیے کرتا ہے کہ جدید زمانے کے نام نہاد عقلیت پرست ایسی باتوں کو ماننے کے لیے تیار نہیں ہیں تو ہم اس سے پوچھتے ہیں کہ بندہ خدا تیرے اوپر یہ فرض کس نے عائد کیا تھا کہ تو کسی طرح انہیں منوا کر ہی چھوڑ؟ جو شخص قرآن کو۔ جیسا کہ وہ ہے ماننے کے لیے تیار نہیں ہے اسے اس کے حال پر چھوڑ دو۔۔۔“⁴⁰²۔

THE SPEAKING OF ANT

The Holy Quran says : “Until when they came to the valley of the ants, an ant said : O ants, enter your houses, (lest) Solomon and his hosts crush you, while they know not”. (27 : 18).

Ibn Abbas, explains it as such :

”... دادي نمل) بارض الشام مضوا على واد فيه النمل (وهم لا يشعرون) ويقال وهم يعني جنود سليمان لم يشعروا قول النملة (فتبسم) سليمان (ضاحكا) تعجبا (من قولها) من قول النملة لانه علم كلامها دون جنوده“⁴⁰³ -

Explaining the nature of Naml (ant) al-Tabari says :

”عن عوف. في قوله (قالت نملة يا ايها النمل) قال- كان نمل سليمان بن داؤد مثل الذباب“⁴⁰⁴ -

al-Baghwi explains :

”فسمع سليمان قولها و كان لا يتكلم خلق الا حملت الريح ذالك فالقيه في مسامع سليمان . . . والمشهور انه النمل الصغير“⁴⁰⁵ -

al-Zamakhshari tells that the ant was an ordinary one :

”هو واد بالشام كثير النمل . . . كأنهم ارادوا ان ينزلوا عند منقطع الوادي. لانهم ما دامت الريح تحملهم في الهواء لا يخاف حطمهم . . . والنمل الذي عليه الاستعمال . . . فسمع سليمان كلامها من ثلاثة اميال“⁴⁰⁶ -

al-Zamakhshari cites an interesting event in this connection mentioning whether the ant was male or female :

”وعن قتادة انه دخل الكوفة فالتف عليه الناس. فقال - سلوا عما شئتم. و كان ابو حنيفة رحمة الله حاضرا وهو غلام حدث. فقال سلوه عن نملة سليمان. اكانت ذكرا ام أنثى؟ فسالوه فافحم. فقال ابو حنيفة - كانت انثى فقبل له - من اين عرفت؟ قال - من كتاب الله وهو قوله (قالت نملة) ولو كانت ذكرا لقال - قال نملة“⁴⁰⁷ -

The great scholar, al-Razi does not consider speaking of the ant to be incredible. He says :

”(قالت نملة) فالمعنى انها تكلمت بذالك وهذا غير مستبعد فان الله تعالى قادر على ان يخلق فيها العقل و النطق“⁴⁰⁸ -

al-Qurtabi argues that the ant was not a big creature but an ordinary ant and its speaking was a miracle of Solomon :

”و افهم الله تعالى النملة هذا لتكون معجزة سليمان . . . قلت و قوله لا يحطمنكم يدل على صحة قول الكلبي. اذ لو كانت كهئية الذباب و النعاج لما حطمت بالوط و الله اعلم“⁴⁰⁹ -

al-Baidawi follows al-Razi :

”كانها لما را منهم متوجهين الى الوادي فرت عنهم مخافة حطمهم فتبعها غيرها . . . انه لا يمتنع ان خلق الله تعالى فيها العقل او النطق“⁴¹⁰ -

Allama al-Nasafi derives a nice point from the saying of ant that it admitted the justice of Solomon :

” (و هم لا يشعرون) اى لو شعروا لم يفعلوا قالت ذالك على وجه العذر واصفه سليمان جنوده بالعدل فسمع سليمان قولها من ثلاثة اميال“⁴¹¹ -

al-Khazin mentioning a grammatical point, follows al-Razi :

” (. . . ادخلوا مساكنكم) ولم يقل ادخلن لانه جعل لهم عقولا كالادمين فخطبوا خطاب الادميين و هذا ليس مستبعد ان يخلق الله فيها عقلا و نطقا فانه قادر على ذالك“⁴¹² -

Abu Hayyan argues the credibility of

”والظاهر صدور القول من النملة و فهم سليمان كلامها كما فهم منطق الطير . . . و قال ابن بحر نطقت بالصوت معجزه لسليمان ككلام الضب و الذرع للرسول“⁴¹³ -

Ibn Kathir concludes :

”و الغرض ان سليمان فهم قولها و تبسم ضاحكا من ذالك و هذا امر عظيم جدا“⁴¹⁴ -

al-Mahalli explains :

”و ادى النمل هو بالطائف او بالشام نملة صغار او كبار قالت نملة ملكة النمل“⁴¹⁵ -

al-Suyuti follows al-Tabari that the ant of Solomon was a big one:

”عن زوف قال كان النمل فى زمن سليمان بن داود امثال الذباب . . .“⁴¹⁶ -

al-Tabarsi explains the speaking of the ant in a different manner :

”قالت نملة) اى صاحبت بصوت خلق الله لها و لما كان الصوت مفهوما لسليمان عبر عنه بالقول و قيل كانت رئيسة النمل“⁴¹⁷ -

Answering to a question how the ant came to know that it was Solomon who was coming, al-Tabrasi tells :

”قلنا اذا كانت مامورة بطاعته فلا بد ان يخلق لها من الفهم ما تعرف به امور طاعته ولا يتمنع ان يكون لها من الفهم ما يستدرک به ذالك“ -

He, further, gives various examples of the wisdom of ant how she collects and preserves the grain and cuts them into two or four.⁴¹⁸

Shah Waliullah's translation is very explicit on the speaking of the ant :

”تا وقتیکه رسیدند به میدان موران گفت مورچه اى مورچگان در آئید بخانهائى خود تا درهم نشکنند شما را سليمان و لشکر هائى او نادانسته“⁴¹⁹ -

al-Shaukani gives the justification of the smiling of Solomon on listening to the ant :

”و كان ضحك سليمان تعجبا من قولها و فهمها و اهتدائها الى تحذير النمل“⁴²⁰ -

al-Alusi strongly argues in defence of the wisdom of the ant and tells that the ant of Solomon was an ordinary one :

”و من تتبع احوال النمل لا يستبعد ان تكون له نفس ناطقة يدخر فى الصيف ما يقتات به فى الشتاء و يشق ما يدخره من العجوب نصفين مخافة ان يصيبه الندى . . . و الظاهر ايضا انها كانت كسائر النمل فى الجثة“⁴²¹ -

He further points out that the ant knew the arrival of Solomon by Divine revelation :
 ”ان علم النملة بان الاتى هو سليمان عليه السلام و جنوده كان عن الهام منه عز و جل و ذالك
 كعلم الضب برسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حين تكلم معه“⁴²² -

al-Tantawi has stated various stories, customs and wonders of the ant and has given pictures showing its activities. It was her wisdom that made Solomon smile :
 ”فعرف عجائب غرائزها و طبائعها و تبسم لما خالج قلبه من الحكمة البديعة و الالهام العجيب
 و كيف كانت مع صغرها ملهمة من الله عارفة مصادرها و مواردھا“⁴²³ -

Shah Abdul Qadir translates 27 : 18 as follows :

”یہاں تک کہ جب پوہنچے چیوٹوں کے میدان پر کہا ایک چیوٹی نے اے چیوٹو گھس جاؤ
 اپنے گھروں میں نہ پیس ڈالے تم کو سلیمان اور اس کے لشکر اور اونکو خبر نہ ہو“⁴²⁴ -

Daryabadi, like Tantawi remarks about the ant :

”A species of animals well-known not only for industry but also for wisdom and foresight“⁴²⁵.

Maulana Thanwi explains that Solomon thanked God for his blessings that he could know the ant's speech :

”اور (یہ دیکھ کر کہ میں اس کی بولی سمجھ گیا - جو معجزہ ہونے کی وجہ سے ایک نعمت
 عظیم ہے اور نعمتیں بھی یاد آگئیں اور) کہنے لگے کہ اے میرے رب مجھ کو اس پر
 مداومت دیجیے کہ میں آپ کی ان نعمتوں کا شکر کیا کروں“⁴²⁶ -

Usmani regards it an explicit miracle :

”چیونٹی کی آواز کوئی (آدمی) نہیں سنتا - انہیں (سلیمان علیہ السلام) کو معلوم ہوگئی
 یہ ان کا معجزہ ہوا - باقی سلیمان علیہ السلام کا پتہ لگا لینا اور سلیمان، کا اس کی بات پر مطلع
 ہو جانا بطریق خرق عادت تھا“⁴²⁷ -

Maulana Maudoodi refuting those who iuterpret it against the text of Quran, concludes :

”عقلی حیثیت سے یہ بات کچھ بھی بعید نہیں ہے کہ ایک چیونٹی اپنی جنس کے افراد کو
 کسی آتے ہوئے خطرے سے خبردار کرے اور بلوں میں گھس جانے کے لیے کہے - رہی یہ
 بات کہ حضرت سلیمان نے اس کی بات کیسے سن لی تو جس شخص کے حواس کلام وحی جیسے
 لطیف چیز کا ادراک کر سکتے ہوں - اس کے لیے چیونٹی کے کلام جیسی کثیف چیز کا ادراک
 کر لینا کوئی بڑی مشکل بات نہیں ہے“⁴²⁸ -

BRINGING THE THRONE OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

The Holy Quran says : ”One audacious among the Jinn said : I will bring it to thee before thou rise up from thy place ; and surely I am strong, trusty for it. One having knowledge of the Book said : I will bring it to thee before thy gaze returns. Then when he saw it settled beside him, he said : This is of the grace of my Lord”
 (27 : 39-40).

Ibn Abbas explains it as follows :

”قال الذى عنده علم من الكتاب) اسم الله الاعظم يا حي يا قيوم وهو اصف بن برخيا (انا اتيك به قبل ان يرتد اليك طرفك) قبل ان يبلغ اليك الشئى الذى رايتہ من بعيد“⁴²⁹ -

al-Tabari explains, following Ibn Abbas, the bringing of the throne :

”فدعا بالاسم. و هو عنده قائم. فاحتمل العرش احتمالا. حتى وضع بين يدى سليمان. والله صنع ذلك“⁴³⁰ -

He has further depicted the beauties of decoration of the throne.

al-Baghwi tells how the throne was brought :

”فنظر نحو اليمن فدعا اصف. فبعث الله الملكة فحملوا السرير من تحت الارض . . . حتى انخرقت الارض بالسرير بين يدى سليمان“⁴³¹ -

al-Zamakhshari mentions various persons who might have brought the throne and how it was brought :

”وقيل هو اصف بن برخيا كاتب سليمان و كان صديقا عالما. و قيل اسمه اسطوم و قيل هو جبريل و قيل ملك ايد الله به سليمان. و قيل هو سليمان نفسه كانه استبطا عفريت فقال له - انا اريك ما هو اسرع مما تقول“ -

و يروى ان اصف قال لسليمان - مدعينيك حتى ينتهى طرفك. فمد عينيه فنظر نحو اليمن و دعا اصف فغار العرش فى مكانه بمأرب. ثم نبغ عند مجلس سليمان بالشام بقدره الله قبل ان يرد طرفه“⁴³² -

The great scholar, al-Razi, opines that it was Solomon himself who brought the throne. He argues as such :

”والشخص المعروف بانه عنده علم الكتاب هو سليمان عليه السلام. فوجب الصرافه اليه. اقصى ما فى الباب ان يقال. كان اصف كذلك ايضا لكننا نقول ان سليمان عليه السلام. كان اعرف بالكتاب منه لانه هو النبى. فكان صرف هذا اللفظ الى سليمان عليه السلام اولى. الثانى ان احضار العرش فى تلك الساعة اللطيفة درجة عالية فلو حصلت لاصف دون سليمان لاقتضى ذلك تفضيل اصف على سليمان و انه غير جائز. . . سليمان قال (هذا من فضل ربه) و ظاهره يقتضى ان يكون ذلك المعجز قد اظهره الله تعالى بدعاء سليمان“⁴³³ -

al-Qurtabi differs with al-Razi in determining the bringer of the throne. Quoting various sources he concludes :

”قال ابن عطيه - و الذى عليه الجمهور من الناس انه رجل صالح من بنى اسرائيل اسمه اصف بن برخيا روى انه صلى ركعتين ثم قال لسليمان - يا نبى الله امدد بصرك فمد بصره نحو اليمن فاذا بالعرش فما رد سليمان بصره الا و هو عنده“⁴³⁴ -

Quoting al-Qushairi he asserts that the performer of this miracle was not Solomon :

”قال القشيري. و قد انكر كرامات الاولياء من قال ان الذى عنده علم من الكتاب هو سليمان“⁴³⁵ -

Discussing this miracle, al-Baidawi, explains :

”طرفک للعقریت کانه اسبتطاه فقال له ذالک اواراد اظهار معجزة فی نقله فتحداهم اولاً ثم اراهم انه يتاقى له ما لا يتھیا لعقاریت الجن . . . هذا من فضل ربی . . . و الاشارة الى التمكن من احضار العرش فی مدة ارتداد الطرف من مسیرة شهرین بنفسه او غیره“⁴³⁶۔

al-Baidawi, as we have seen his explanation, is not certain who brought the throne but Allama al-Nasafi, mentioning various sources, puts stress on this point that it was Asif who brought the throne :

” . . . او آصف بن برخیا کاتب سلیمان وهو الاصح و علیه الجمهور . . . فدعا آصف فغار العرش فی مکانه ثم نبغ عند مجلس سلیمان لقدرة الله تعالى قبل ان یرتد طرفه“⁴³⁷۔

al-Khazin⁴³⁸, Abu Hayyan⁴³⁹, Ibn Kathir⁴⁴⁰, al-Mahalli⁴⁴¹, al-Suyuti⁴⁴² & al-Tabarsi⁴⁴³, all explain the bringing of the throne of the Queen of Sheba in the like manner. Shah Waliullah translates 27 : 40 and is very clear about its miraculous nature :

”گفت شخصی کہ نزدیک او علم بود از کتاب الہی من بیمارمش نزدیک تو پیش از آنکہ باز گردد بسوئی تو چشم تو پس چون سلیمان دید آنرا قرار گرفته نزدیک خویش گفت این خارق عادت از فضل پروردگار من است“⁴⁴⁴۔

al-Shaukani⁴⁴⁵ and al-Alusi⁴⁴⁶ also explain this miracle like their predecessors.

al-Tantawi, remarks :

”ان سلیمان علیه السلام اوحى الیه ان یوجهہ ہمتہ الى احضار عرش بلقیس بطریق العوالم اللطیفة الروحیة فحضر العرش“⁴⁴⁷۔

He says that the Queen admitted his prophethood :

”و لما ظنت انه اراد بذالک اختیار عقلها و اظهار معجزة لها قالت (و اوتینا العلم) بکمال قدرة الله تعالى و صحة نبوتک“⁴⁴⁸۔

Shah Abdul Qadir translates 27 : 40 as such :

”بولا وہ شخص جس کے پاس تھا ایک علم کتاب کا۔ میں لا دیتا ہوں تجھ کو وہ پہلے اس سے کہ پھر آوے تیری طرف تیری آنکھ پھر جب دیکھا وہ دھرا اپنے پاس کہا یہ میرے رب کے فضل سے ہے . . . یعنی ظاہر کے اسباب سے نہیں آیا اللہ کا فضل ہے کہ میرے رفیق اس درجے کو پہنچے جن سے کرامت ہونے لگی . . . وہ شخص آصف تھا ان کا وزیر“⁴⁴⁹۔

Daryabadi mentioning the time spent in bringing the throne tells :

” . . . Without the loss of a single moment“⁴⁵⁰۔

Thanwi, following Ibn Kathir, remarks :

”تخت کا منگنا غالباً اس غرض سے ہے کہ وہ لوگ میرا معجزہ بھی دیکھ لیں۔ کیونکہ اتنا بڑا تخت اور پھر اس کا ایسے سخت پہروں میں اس طور پر یکایک آجانا کہ اطلاع تک نہ ہو عادت بشریہ سے خارج ہے۔ اگر تسخیر جن سے ہے تب بھی خود بخود مسخر ہو جانا خارق عادت ہے اور اگر بواسطہ کرامت کسی ولی امت کے ہے تو ولی کی کرامت نبی کا معجزہ ہے اور اگر بلاواسطہ ہے تو براہ راست معجزہ ہے“⁴⁵¹۔

Usmani, regarding 'Karamat' of a saint to be the miracle of the prophet, argues for the credibility of bringing of the throne :

”معلوم ہوا کہ اعجاز و کرامت فی الحقیقت خداوند قدیر کا فعل ہے جو ولی یا نبی کے ہاتھ پر خلاف معمول ظاہر کیا جاتا ہے پس جس کی قدرت سے سورج یا زمین کا کرہ ایک لمحہ میں ہزاروں میل کی مسافت طے کر لیتا ہے۔ اسے کیا مشکل ہے کہ تخت بلقیس کو پاک جھپکنے میں ”مآرب“ سے ”شام“ پہنچا دے حالانکہ تخت بلقیس کو سورج اور زمین سے ذرہ اور پہاڑ کی نسبت ہے“⁴⁵²۔

Maulana Maudoodi concludes :

”جن اپنے وجود کی طاقت سے اس تخت کو چند گھنٹوں میں اٹھا لانے کا دعویٰ کر رہا تھا یہ شخص علم کی طاقت سے اس کو ایک لحظہ میں اٹھا لایا“⁴⁵³۔

THE ASCENSION OF THE HOLY PROPHET (P.B.U.H.)

The Holy Quran says : “Glory to Him who carried His servant by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Remote Mosque whose precincts We blessed, that We might show him of Our signs ! Surely He is the Hearing, the Seeing” (17 : 1).

Ibn Abbas explains it as follows :

”(اسری بعبدہ) سیر عبدہ (لیلاً) اول اللیل (من المسجد الحرام) عن الحرم من بیت ام ہانی بنت ابی طالب (الی المسجد الاقصی) ابعده من الارض و اقرب الی السماء یعنی مسجد بیت المقدس (لذی بارکناه حولہ) بالماء و الاشجار و الثمار (لنربہ) لکی نری محمدا صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم (من ایاتنا) من عجائبنا فکل ما رای تلک اللیلة کان من عجائب اللہ (انہ هو السميع) لمقالة قریش (البصیر) بہم و بسیر عبدہ محمد“⁴⁵⁴۔

The great scholar, al-Tabari, quoting various sources on the ascension of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and discussing various aspects of the ascension, concludes :

”و الصواب من القول فی ذالک عندنا۔ ان یقال۔ ان اللہ اسری بعیدہ محمد صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم من المسجد الحرام الی المسجد الاقصی۔ کما اخبر اللہ عباده۔ و کما تظاہرت بہ الاخبار عن رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم۔ ان اللہ حملہ علی البراق۔ حین اتاہ بہ۔ و صلی ہنالک بمن صلی من الانبیاء و الرسل۔ فاراہ ما اراہ من الایات“⁴⁵⁵۔

Criticising those who reject physical ascension, the great scholar, argues :

”ولا معنی لقول من قال۔ اسری بروحہ دون جسده۔ لان ذالک لوکان کذا لک لم یکن فی ذالک ما یوجب ان یكون ذالک دلیلاً علی نبوتہ۔ ولا حجة له علی رسالته و لا کان الذین انکروا حقیقة ذالک من اهل الشکر کانوا یدفعون بہ عن صدقہ فیہ۔ اذ لم یکن منکرا عندهم ولا عند احد من ذوی الفطرة الصحیحة من بنی ادم ان یرى الرائی منهم فی المنام ما علی مسیرة منة فکیف ما هو علی مسیرة شهر او اقل؟ و بعد۔ فان اللہ انما اخبر فی کتابہ انہ اسری بعبدہ و لم یخبرنا انہ اسری بروح عبدہ و لیس جائزاً لاحد ان یتعدی ما قال اللہ الی غیرہ“⁴⁵⁶

Answering an objection that the word روح may be considered he argues :

”بل الأدلة الواضحة. و الاخبار المتتابعة عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ان الله اسرى به على دابة يقال لها البراق. و لو كان الاسراء بروحه لم تكن الروح محمولة على البراق. اذ كانت الدواب لا تحمل الا الاجسام“⁴⁵⁷

al-Baghwi, narrating the the traditional story of the ascension of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) concludes :

”ولا كثرون على انه اسرى بجسده في اليقظة و تواترت الاخبار الصحيحة على ذلك“⁴⁵⁸ -

Discussing the ascension of the Holy Prophet, al-Zamakhshari tells :

”قلت - اراد بقوله (ليلاً) بلفظ التنكير - تقليل مدة الاسراء و انه اسرى به في بعض الليل من مكة الى الشام مسيرة اربعين ليلة“⁴⁵⁹ -

He repeats the traditional story as narrated by Malik bin Sasa and explains :

”و اختلف في انه كان في اليقظة ام في المنام فعن عائشة انها قالت - والله ما فقد جسد رسول الله ولكن عرج بروحه و عن معاوية - انما عرج بروحه و عن الحسن كان في المنام رويها رايها و اكثر الاقويل بخلاف ذلك و المسجد الاقصى - بيت المقدس فانه لم يكن حينئذ وراء مسجد (انه هو السميع) لا قوال محمد (البصير) العالم بتهذيبها و خلوصها فيكرمه و يقر به على حسب ذلك“⁴⁶⁰ -

The great theologian and commentator al-Razi, discussing the ascension of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) states :

”فالا كثرون من طوائف المسلمين اتفقوا على انه اسرى بجسد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم و الاقلون قالوا - انه ما اسرى الابروحه“⁴⁶¹ -

The great scholar argues that the ascension was not only spiritual but also physical :

”انه كما يستبعد في العقل صعود الجسم الكثيف من مركز العالم الى ما فوق العرش فكذلك يستبعد نزول الجسم اللطيف الروحاني من فوق العرش الى مركز العالم. فان كان القول بمعراج محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم في الليلة الواحدة ممتنعاً في العقول. كان القول بنزول جبريل عليه الصلاة والسلام من العرش الى مكة في اللحظة الواحدة ممتنعاً ولو حكمنا بهذا الامتناع كان ذلك طعناً في نبوة جميع الانبياء عليهم المصلاوة والسلام. و القول بثبوت المعراج فرع على تسليم جواز اصل النبوة فثبت ان القائلين بامتناع حصول حركة سريعة الى هذا الحد. يلزمهم القول بامتناع نزول جبريل عليه الصلاة والسلام في اللحظة من العرش الى مكة - ولما كان ذلك باطلاً كان ما ذكره ايضاً باطلاً“⁴⁶² -

He concludes :

”و حينئذ يلزم من مجموع هذه المقدمات ان القول بثبوت هذا المعراج امر ممكن الوجود في نفسه اقصى ما في الباب انه يبقى التعجب . الا ان هذا التعجب غير مخصوص بهذا المقام . بل هو حاصل في جميع المعجزات“⁴⁶³ -

al-Qurtabi, explaining the word "عبد" quotes al-Qushairi :

"قال القشيري - لما رفعه الله تعالى الى حضرته السنية و ارقاه فوق الكواكب العلوية الزمه اسم العبودية تواضعا للامة" 464 -

Discussing the ascension of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) he concludes :

"ثبت الاسراء في جميع مصنفات و روى عن الصحابة في كل اقطار الاسلام فهو من المتواتر بهذا الوجه" 465 -

He repeats the traditional story and argues that the ascension was physico-spiritual and not spiritual only:

"وذهب معظم السلف والمسلمين الى انه كان اسراء بالجسد واليقظة وانه ركب البراق بمكة و وصل الى بيت المقدس و صلى فيه ثم اسرى بجسده و على هذا تدل الاخبار التي اشرنا اليها و الاية و ليس في الاسراء بجسده و حال يقظته استحالة. و لا يعدل عن الظاهر والحقيقة الى التاويل الاعند الاستحالة. و لو كان مناما لقال بروح عبده و لم يقل بعبده و قوله "ما زاغ البصر وما طغى" يدل على ذلك و لو كان مناما لما كانت فيه اية و لا معجزة. . . فلو كان بالرويا لم يستتروا قد قال له المشركون - ان كنت صادقا فخبيرنا عن غيرنا اين لقيتها قال - بمكان كذا و كذا مررت عليها ففزع فلان" 466 -

The great scholar, Ibn Arabi, cites philosophical arguments to establish the credibility of physical ascension of the Holy Prophet :

"المسئلة ابين عند الانصاف فان المنكر لذلك لا يخلوان يكون ملحدا ينكر القدرة ويرى ان الثقل لا يصعد علوا و طبعه الاستفال فما باله يتكلم معنا في هذا الفرع و هو منكر للاصل و هو وجود الاله و قدرته و انه ليصرف الاشياء بالعلم و الارادة لا بالطبيعة و ان كان المنكر من اغبياء الملة يقر معنا بالالهية و العلم و الارادة و القدرة على التصريف و التدبير و التقدير فيقال له و ما الذي يمنع من ارتقاء النبي في الهواء بقدرة خالق الارض و السماء فان قال لانه لم يرد قلنا له قد ورد من كل طريق على لسان كل فريق" 467 -

Allama al-Baidawi, narrating the traditional story of the ascension of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) explains :

"من المسجد الحرام - بعينه . . . و لذلك تعجب قريش و استحالوه استحاله و الاستحالة مدفوعة بما ثبت في الهندسة ان ما بين طرفي قرص الشمس ضعف ما بين كرة الارض مائة و ينفا و ستين مرة ثم ان طرفها الاسفل يصل موضع طرفها الاعلى في اقل من ثمانية و قد برهن في الكلام ان الاجسام متساوية في قبول الاعراض و ان الله تعالى قادر على كل الممكنات فيقدر ان يخلق مثل هذه الحركة السريعة في بدن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم او فيما يحمله (البراق) و التعجب من لوازم المعجزات و ظهورها" 468 -

The great scholar, al-Nasafi, narrating the traditional story of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) explains :

"وكان العروج به من بيت المقدس و قد اخير قريشا عن غيرهم و عدد جمالها و احوالها و اخبرهم ايضا بما راي في السماء من العجائب و انه لقي الانبياء عليهم السلام و بلغ البيت المحصور و مدرة المنتهى و كان الاسراء قبل الهجرة لسنة و كان في اليقظة" 469 -

He concludes that the ascension was physical :

”اذلا فضيلة للحلم و لامزية للنائم“ -

Allama al-Khazin, narrates the traditional story of ascension and argues that it was physical. He very scholastically argues :

”فان قلت ظاهر الاية يدل على ان الاسراء كان الى بيت المقدس والاحاديث الصحيحة تدل على انه عرج به الى السماء فكيف الجمع بين الدليلين وما فائدة ذكر المسجد الاقصى فقط قلت قد كان الاسراء على ظهر البراق الى المسجد الاقصى ومنه كان عروجه الى السماء . . . وفائدة ذكر المسجد الاقصى فقط انه صلى الله عليه وسلم لواخبر بصعوده الى السماء اولا لاشد انكارهم لذلك فلما اخبر انه اسرى به الى بيت المقدس و بان لهم صدقه فيما اخبر به من العلامات التي فيه و صدقوه عليها اخبر بعد ذلك بحروجه الى السماء فجعل الاسراء الى المسجد الاقصى كالتوطئة لمعراجه الى السماء“⁴⁷⁰ -

After discussing thoroughly and citing strong arguments he concludes :

”والحق الذي عليه اكثر الناس ومعظم للسلف و عامة الخلف من المتأخرين من الفقهاء و المحدثين و المتكلمين انه اسرى بروحه و جسده صلى الله عليه وسلم و يدل عليه قوله سبحانه و تعالى سبحانه الذي اسرى بعبده ليلا و لفظ العبد عبارة عن مجموع الروح و الجسد و الاحاديث الصحيحة التي تقدمت تدل على صحة هذا القول“⁴⁷¹ -

Allama al-Khazin also points out the arguments cited by Hazrat Abu Bakr :

”قال لئن كان قال ذلك لقد صدق قالوا او تصدقه انه ذهب الى بيت المقدس و جاء في ليلة قبل ان يصبح قال نعم انى اصدقه بما هو ابعد من ذلك اصدقه بخبر السماء في غدوة او روحة فلذلك سمى ابوبكر الصديق“⁴⁷² -

The great scholar, Abu Hayyan, discussing the ascension of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) remarks :

”و الظاهر ان هذا الاسراء كان بشخصه و لذلك كذبت قريش به و شنت عليه و حين قص ذلك على ام هانى قالت لا تحدث الناس بها فيكذبوك و لو كان منا ما استنكر ذلك و هو قول جمهور اهل العلم و هو الذي ينبغي ان يعتقد و حديث الاسراء مروى في المسانيد عن الصحابة في كل اقطار الاسلام“⁴⁷³ -

The celebrated commentator, Ibn Kathir, commenting on 17 : 1, concludes :

”والحق انه عليه السلام اسرى به يقظة لا مناما من مكة الى بيت المقدس راكبا البراق - فلما انتهى الى باب المسجد ربط الدابة عند الباب و دخله فصلى في قبلته تحية المسجد ركعتين ثم اتى بالمعراج و هو كالسلم ذو درج يرقى فيها فصعد فيه الى السماء“⁴⁷⁴ -

The co-authors of Jalalain al-Mahalli⁴⁷⁵ and al-Suyuti⁴⁷⁶ put the same idea.

The shia scholar, al-Tabarsi, discussing the ascension of the Holy Prophet, (P.B.U.H.) refutes those who do not believe in the physical ascension :

”وما قاله بعضهم ان ذلك كان في النوم فظاهر البطلان. اذلا معجز فيه ولا برهان. و قد وردت روايات كثيرة في قصة المعراج نبينا الى السماء“⁴⁷⁷ -

Mulla Jiwan, arguing strongly for the credibility of the ascension and answering some objections, remarks :

”فان ارادوا ان المعراج الى السماء لا يثبت من القرآن اصلا فباطل. و ان ارادوا ان الاية الدالة على ثبوته الى بيت المقدس محكمة قطعية الدلالة بخلاف سورة النجم فانها محتملة غير قطعية الدلالة مع انه لا يدل عليه كلامهم غير ظاهر اذ الظاهر انها ايضا قطعية الدلالة في ثبوت المعراج و ان كانت في نفسها محتمل المعنيين . . . و الاصح انه كان في اليقظة و كان بجسده مع روحه و عليه اهل السنة و الجماعة“ 478 -

Shah Waliullah, translates 17 : 1 as follows :

”پاک است آکھ ببرد بندہ خود راشبی از مسجد حرام بسوئی مسجد اقصی کہ برکت نهادیم گردا گرد آن تا نمائش بعض نشانہائے خود هر آئینہ اوست شنوا بنیا“ 479 -

al-Shaukani is very clear on the physical ascension of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.):

”ان الاسراء بجسده و روحه يقظة الى بيت المقدس ثم الى السموات ولا حاجة الى التاويل و صرف هذا النظم القرآني و ما يماثله من الفاظ الاحاديث الى ما يخالف الحقيقة . . . ما هو معلوم من انه لا يستحيل عليه سبحانه شئ . . . ركب البراق و كيف يصح و صف الروح بالركوب“ 480 -

Allama al-Alusi, remarks :

”و ذهب الجمهور الى انه في اليقظة ببدنه و روحه صلى الله تعالى عليه وسلم“ 481 -

He cites a nice point :

”و انما اسرى به صلى الله تعالى عليه وسلم اولا الى بيت المقدس و عرج به ثانيا منه ليكون وصوله الى الا ما كن الشريفه على التدرج“ 482 -

al-Tantawi concludes :

”و الاكثر على انه اسرى به بجسده الى البيت المقدس ثم عرج به الى السموات حتى انتهى الى مدرة المنتهى . . . و اقرب الامر الى الناس الاسراء الى المسجد الاقصى و لذلك امتحنوه بعلامات تدل على الصدق فلذلك صرح بها في القرآن و جعلت قبل عروجه الى السماء ليكون المحسوس دليلا على ما لا يحس و اذا صدق في الاولى فليصدق في الاخرة“ 483 -

al-Tantawi points out the lesson to be learnt from the event of ascension :

”ان هذه القصة تدعو حثيثا الماسمين ان يخترقوا حجب هذه العوالم بالتعليم و يرتقوا. هل كان نبينا محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول ذلك مجرد حكاية او ثبات نبوة ؟ كلا بل كان ايضا يقولها للاقتداء به في علو الهمة و اختراق الافاق سياحة و علما“ 484 -

Shah Abdul Qadir's translation is as follows :

”پاک ذات ہے جو لے گیا اپنے بندے کو رات رات ادب والی مسجد سے پرلی مسجد تک جس میں ہم نے خوبیاں رکھی ہیں کہ دکھاویں اس کو کچھ اپنی قدرت کے نمونے وہی ہے سنتا دیکھتا“ 485 -

Strongly arguing for the physical ascension of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) Maulana Maudoodi remarks :

”لہذا ہمارے لیے یہ مانے بغیر چارہ نہیں کہ یہ محض ایک روحانی تجربہ نہ تھا بلکہ ایک جسمانی سفر اور عینی مشاہدہ تھا۔ جو اللہ تعالیٰ نے نبی صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کو کرایا“ 486۔

Usmani says :

”جمہور سلف و خلف کا عقیدہ یہ ہے کہ حضور پر نور کو حالت بیداری میں بجسدہ الشریف معراج ہوئی۔۔۔ بعض احادیث میں صاف لفظ ہیں ”ثم اصبحتم بمكة“ یا ”ثم اتيت مكة“ اگر معراج محض کوئی روحانی کیفیت تھی تو آپ مکہ سے غائب ہی کہاں ہوئے“ 487۔

RENDERING ASUNDER OF THE MOON

The Holy Quran says : “The hour drew nigh and the moon was rent asunder. And if they see a sign, they turn away and say : Strong enchantment” (54 : 1). Ibn Abbas explains it as follows :

”(اقتربت الساعة) يقول دنا قيام الساعة بخروج محمد صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم و نزول الدخان (و انشق القمر نصفين و هو من علامات القيامة (و ان يروا اية مثل انشقاق القمر)“ 488۔

The celebrated commentator, al-Tabari, explains :

”يقول جل ثناؤه - و انفلق القمر. و كان ذلك فيما ذكر على عهد رسول الله صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم و هو بمكة. قبل هجرته الى المدينة. و ذلك ان كفار اهل مكة سالوه اية فاراهم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم انشقاق القمر اية. حجة على صدق قوله و حقيقة نبوته - فلما اراهم اعرضوا و كذبوا و قالوا هذا سحر مستمر. سحرنا محمد“ 489۔

al-Baghwi, narrating the traditional story, tells :

”ررى ابو الضحى عن مسروق عن عبدالله قال انشق القمر على محمد رسول الله صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم فقال قریش سحرکم ابن ابی کبشه فسئلوا السفار فسالوهم فقالوا نعم قد رايناہ - ”و كذبوا و اتبعوا اهواءهم ای كذبوا النبي صلعم و ما عاينوا من قدرة الله عز و جل“ . . .“ 490۔

al-Zamakhshari regards it a great miracle of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.):

”انعشاق القمر من ايات رسول الله صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم و معجزاته النبوة. عن انس بن مالك ان الكفار سالوا رسول الله اية فانشق القمر مرتين“ 491۔

He explains the link and connection between the occurrence of this miracle and coming near of the Hour as follows :

”كما تقول قبل الامير و قد جاء المبشر بقدمه و عن حذينة انه خطب بالمدائن ثم قال - الا ان الساعة قد اقتربت و ان القمر قد انشق على عهد نبيكم“ 492۔

The great theologian al-Razi strongly argues :

”و القرآن اول دليل و اقوى مثبت له و امكانه لا يشك فيه و قد اخبر عنه الصادق فيجب اعتقاد وقوعه و حديث امتناع الخرق و الالتئام حديث اللثام. و قد ثبت جواز الخرق و التخريب على السموات و ذكرنا، مرارا. . .“ 493۔

al-Qurtabi argues :

”قلت - وقد ثبت بنقل الاحاد العدد لان القمر انشق بمكة و هو ظاهر التنزيل و لا يلزم ان يستوى الناس فيها. لانها كانت اية ليلية“⁴⁹⁴ -

Allama al-Baidawi, mentioning the rendering asunder of the moon points out that the pagans saw other miracles also :

”يدل على انهم راوا قبله ايات اخرى مترادفة و معجزات متتابعة حتى قالوا ذلك“⁴⁹⁵ -

al-Nasafi, explaining the miracle, answers to a question :

”ان القمر قد انشق . . . لانه يجوز ان يحجبه الله عنهم بغيم“⁴⁹⁶ -

al-Khazin remarks :

”وانشق القمر من ايات رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الظاهرة و معجزاته الباهرة يدل عليه ما روى عن انس ان اهل مكة سالوا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ان يريهم اية فاراهم انشقاق القمر مرتين . . . عن ابن مسعود قال انشق القمر على عهد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم شقتين فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اشهدوا“⁴⁹⁷ -

Abu Hayyan criticizes those who clamp on it different meanings :

”والامة مجمعة على خلاف من زعم ان قوله و انشق القمر معناه انه ينشق يوم القيامة و يردده من الاية قوله و ان يروا اية يعرضوا و يقولوا سحر مستمر فلا يناسب هذا الكلام ان ياتي الابدح ظهور ما سالوه معينا من انشقاق القمر“⁴⁹⁸ -

Ibn Kathir⁴⁹⁹, al-Mahalli⁵⁰⁰ and al-Suyuti⁵⁰¹ explain it in the same way.

al-Tabarsi, explaining it answers objections :

”وهذا لا يصح لان المسلمين اجمعوا على ذلك فلا يعتد بخلاف من خالف فيه و لان اشتهاره بين الصحابة يمنع من القول بخلافه . . . وفي هذا دلالة على ان ذلك قد كان و وقع و اقول و لانه تعالى قد بين انه يكون اية على وجه الاعجاز و انما يحتاج الى الاية المعجزة في الدنيا يستدل الناس بها على صحة النبوة و يعرف صدق الصادق لا في حال انقطاع التكليف و الوقت الذي يكون الناس فيه ملجئين الى المعرفة و لانه سبحانه قال و يقولوا سحر مستمر و في وقت الاجاء لا يقولون المعجزانه سحر“⁵⁰² -

Shah Waliullah explain it as follows :

”نزدك آمد قیامت و بشکافت ماه و اگر کافران به بینند نشانه اعراض کنند و گویند سحر لیست قوی و دروغ شمردند“⁵⁰³ -

al-Shaukani is very clear on the occurrence of this miracle.

Quoting various sources he concludes :

”و المراد الانشقاق الواقع في ايام النبوة معجزة لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم و الى هذا ذهب الجمهور من السلف الخلف . . . والحاصل انا اذا نظرنا الى كتاب الله فقد اخبرنا بانه انشق و لم يخبرنا بانه ينشق. و ان نظرنا الى سنة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقد ثبت في الصحيح وغيره من طرق متواتره انه قد كان ذلك في ايام النبوة و ان نظرنا الى اقوال اهل العلم فقد اتفقوا على هذا“⁵⁰⁴ -

Allama al-Alusi, mentioning this miracle, remarks :

” (وانشق القمر) انفصل بعضه عن بعض و صار فرقتين و ذلك على عهد رسول الله صلى الله تعالى عليه وسلم قبل الهجرة . . . فارادة الله تعالى كافية في الانشقاق و كذا في كل معجزات و خوارق العادت“⁵⁰⁵۔

al-Tantawi, discussing the miracle, regards it a scientific and intellectual miracle :

”فاذن يكون انشقاق القمر في القرآن من المعجزات العلمية لا من حيث ان قرشا رواه منشقا . . . بل ان هذا الذي حصل زمن النبوة تذكرة باشتقاقه عن الارض و انفصاله عنها“⁵⁰⁶۔

Shah Abdul Qadir explains : 54 : 1 as follows :

”پاس آ لگی وہ گھڑی اور پھٹ گیا چاند اور اگر وہ دیکھیں کوئی نشانی ٹال دیں اور کہیں یہ جادو ہے چلا آتا (حج کے دنوں میں آدھی رات کو کافر جمع تھے حضرت آن کو سمجھاتے تھے انہوں نے مانگی کچھ نشانی حضرت نے کہا دیکھو آسمان کی طرف چاند دو ٹکڑے ہو گیا“⁵⁰⁷۔

Daryabadi concludes :

”The allusion is to a famous miracle of the prophet recorded in several authentic traditions of the companions“⁵⁰⁸۔

Maulana Thanwi remarks :

”شق قمر وہ معجزہ ہے رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کا جس سے نبوت ثابت ہوتی ہے“⁵⁰⁹۔

Maulana Usmani tells :

”ناگاہ چاند پھٹ کر دو ٹکڑے ہو گیا . . . جب سب نے خوب اچھی طرح یہ معجزہ دیکھ لیا - دونوں ٹکڑے آپس میں مل گئے - کفار کہنے لگے کہ محمد نے چاند پر یاہم پر جادو کر دیا ہے . . . باین ہمہ تاریخ فرشتہ وغیرہ میں اس کا ذکر موجود ہے - ہندوستان میں مہاراجہ ”مالیبار“ کے اسلام کا سبب اسی واقعہ کو لکھتے ہیں“⁵¹⁰۔

MIRACULOUS NATURE OF THE HOLY QURAN

The Holy Quran says : “Say : If men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Quran, they could not bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others” (17 : 88).

Ibn Abbas explains it as follows :

” (. . . لا یاتون بمثلہ) بمثل هذا القرآن بالغایہ الامر و النهی و الوعد و الوعد و الناسخ و المنسوخ و المحکم و المتشابه و خبر ما کان و ما یکون“⁵¹¹۔

The great scholar al-Tabari, explaining the miraculous nature of the Holy Quran under 2 : 23 says :

”و هذا من الله عز و جل احتجاج لنبیہ محمد صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم علی مشرکی قومہ و منافقہم . . . لانکم تعلمون ان حجة کل ذی نبوة علی صدقہ فی دعواه لنبوة ان یاتی ببرهان یعجز عن ان یاتی بمثلہ جمیع الخلق . . . و اذا عجزتم عن ذالک - وانتم اهل البراعة فی الفصاحة و البلاغة و الذرابة - فقد علمتم ان غیرکم عما عجزتم عنه من ذالک اعجز“⁵¹²۔

Under 17 : 88 he explains :

”يقول - لو برزت الجن و اعانهم الانس. فتظا هروا. لم ياتوا بمثل هذا القرآن“⁵¹³ -

Discussing the miracle of Holy Quran al-Baghwi tells :

”فكذبهم الله تعالى فالقرآن معجز في النظم و التاليف و الاخبار عن الغيوب و هو كلام في اعلا طبقات المبالغة لا يشبه كلام الخلق لانه غير مخلوق و لو كان مخلوقا لاتوا بمثله“⁵¹⁴ -

al-Zamakhshari, like al-Tabari, regards the Holy Quran to be an established evidence for the prophethood of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) :

”... عطف على ذلك ما هو الحجة على اثبات نبوة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم و ما يدحض الشبهة في كون القرآن معجزة. و اراهم كيف بتعرفون اهو من عند الله كما يدعى ام هو من عند نفسه كما يدعون. بارشادهم الى ان يحزروا انفسهم و يذوقوا طباعهم و هم ابنا جنسه و اهل جلدته“⁵¹⁵ -

al-Zamakhshari further argues :

”فيه دليلان على اثبات النبوة - صحة كون المتعدى به معجزا و الاخبار بانهم لن يفعلوا و هو غيب لا يعلمه الا الله... لانهم لو عارضوه بشئ لم يمتنع ان يتواصفه الناس و يتناقضوه. اذ خفاء مثله فيها عليه مبنى العادة محال... فحين لم ينقل علم انه اخبار بالغيب على هو به فكان معجزة“⁵¹⁶ -

The great scholar al-Razi concludes :

”بان عجز البشر عن معارضته يكفى في اثبات كونه معجزا“⁵¹⁷ -

al-Qurtabi, explaining the credibility of miracle, its kinds, illumines the miraculous nature of the Holy Quran, referring to its wonderful composition, unprecedented style, rhetoric, prophecy, all this instead of the illeteracy of the Holy Prophet, (P.B.U.H.) and its being a complete code of life, a comprehensive divine guidance and practical wisdom. He concludes :

”اذا كان كذلك علم ان نفس القرآن هو المعجز. لان فصاحته و بلاغته امر خارق للعادة“⁵¹⁸ -

al-Khazin, like al-Baghwi, remarks :

”فالقرآن معجز في النظم و التاليف و الاخبار عن الغيوب و هو كلام في اعلى طبقات البلاغة لا يشبه كلام الخلق لانه كلام الخالق و هو غير مخلوق و لو كان مخلوقا لاتوا بمثله“⁵¹⁹ -

Abu Hayyan cites strong arguments :

”وهو القرآن الذي عجز العالم عن الاتيان بمثله و انه من اكبر النعم عليه و الفضل الذي ابقى له ذكر الى اخر الدهر و رفع له قدرا به في الدنيا و الاخرة و اذا كان فصحاء اللسان الذي نزل به و بلغا و هم عجزوا عن الاتيان بسورة واحدة مثله فلان يكونوا اعجز عن ان ياتوا بمثل جميعه و لو تعاون الثقلان عليه لا ياتون بمثله و لو كان الجن تفعل الغالا مستغر به كما حكى عنهم في قصة سليمان عليه السلام“⁵²⁰ -

Allama, Ibn Kathir, arguing for uniqueness of the Holy Quran concludes :

”... لما استطاعوه و لو تعاونوا و تساعدوا و تظافروا فان هذا الامر لا يستطاع و كيف يشبه كلام المخلوقين كلام الخالق الذي لا نظير له و لامثال له و لاعديل له“⁵²¹ -

al-Mahalli⁵²², al-Suyuti⁵²³ and al-Tabarsi⁵²⁴ all explain the inimitability of the Holy Quran.

Shah Waliullah's translation in this connection is very clear ;

”بگو اگر جمع شوند آدمیان و جن بر آنکه بپارند مانند این قرآن هرگز نیارند مانند آن و اگرچه باشد بعض ایشان بعض را مدد دهند“⁵²⁵ -

al-Shaukani after arguing concludes :

”ثبت انهم لا ياتون بمثله على كل حال“⁵²⁶ -

al-Alusi points out the wisdom in mentioning men and jinn only to be challenged to bring the like of it :

”و تخصيص الثقلين بالذكر لان المنكر لكونه من عند الله تعالى منهما لا غيرهما والتحدى انما كان معهما وان كان النبي صلى الله تعالى عليه وسلم مبعوثا الى الملك كما هو مبعوث اليهما لا لان غيرهما قادر على المعارضة فان الملائكة عليهم السلام على فرض تصديهم لها و حاشا هم اذهم معصومون لا يفعلون الا ما يأمرون عاجزون كغيرهم“⁵²⁷ -

Allama Rashid Raza, like his predecessors, argues :

”فان خفى عليكم الحق بذاته فهذه اية من اظهر اياته. وهي عجزكم عن الاتيان بسورة من مثل سور القرآن من رجل امي مثل الذي جاءكم به. و هو عبدنا و رسولنا محمد. و ان عجزتم عن الاتيان بسورة من مثله تساوى سورة في هدايتها و تضارعتها في اسلوبها و بلاغتها و التمرس في البلاغة. و عصركم ارقى عصور الفصاحة... فاعلموا ان ماجاء به بعد اربعين سنة فاعجزكم بعد سبقكم لم يكن ان يوحى الهى و امداد سماوى. لم يسم عقله اى علمه و لا بيانه الى اسلوبه و نظمه“⁵²⁸ -

Shah Abdul Qadir explains 17 : 88 as such :

”که اگر جمع هووین آدمی اور جن اس پر کہ لاوین ایسا قرآن - نہ لاوین گے ایسا اور بڑے مدد کریں ایک کی ایک“⁵²⁹ -

Daryabadi remarks :

”No code of law and ethics, no system of sociology could ever be a match to the Holy Quran“⁵³⁰.

Arguing the miraculous nature of the Holy Quran, he explains : من مثله as such :

”In the surpassing excellence of its contents in the grandeur of its language and style, and most of all in the completeness and all-sufficiency of its teachings“⁵³¹.

Maulana Usmani concludes :

”اور جب تم باوجود کمال فصاحت و بلاغت چھوٹی سی سورت کے مقابلے سے بھی عاجز ہو جاؤ تو پھر سمجھ لو کہ یہ اللہ کا کلام ہے کسی بندے کا نہیں۔ اس آیت میں آپ کی نبوت کو مدلل فرمایا“⁵³²۔

F OOT NOTES

1. Ency. of Religion & Ethics, art. "MIRACLE" Cf. also British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books, London, 1962, vol. 109, p. 73.
2. Cf. Dictionary of Bible, Edinburgh, 1914, art. "MIRACLE".
3. (a) Ency. Brit. vol. 15, p. 585.
(b) Collier's Ency., vol. 14, p. 4.
(c) Chamber's Ency., vol. 9, p. 442.
(d) The Ency. Americana, vol. 19, p. 218.
(e) Ency. of Religion & Religions, p. 256.
4. Collier's Ency.
5. Chamber's Ency.
6. The Columbia Ency., p. 1180.
7. Ency. Brit.
8. Collier's Ency.
9. Ency. of Religion & Religions. Cf. also Enquiries by David Hume, II ed., Oxford, 1893, p. 115.
10. World Book Encyclopaedia.
11. Mufradat al Quran, for an etymological discussion see Kitab-al-Mawakif, Egypt, vol. 8, p. 222. on foot note.
12. Al-Quran, 5 : 31.
13. Al-Quran, 9 : 2.
14. Al-Quran, 42 : 31.
15. Persian English Dictionary by Steingass.
16. A commentary on the Creed of Islam by Taftazāni, New York, 1950, p. 129, Cf. also Shorter Ency. of Islam, art. "Miracle".
17. Pillars of the Creed of Sunnites, London, p. 16.
18. Shorter Ency. of Islam.
19. Kitab al-Muwakif. Egypt, 1907. vol. 8, p. 222.
20. Shorter Ency. of Islam, art. "Mudjiza".
21. As pointed out in shorter Ency. of Islam.
22. Al-Quran, 54 : 1-3.
23. Al-Quran, 17 : 1.
24. Al-Quran, 3 : 60.
25. Al-Quran, 8 : 17.
26. Al-Quran, 30 : 2.
27. Al-Quran, 9 : 40.

28. Al-Quran, 66 : 3.
29. Al-Quran, 48 : 27.
30. Al-Quran, 3 : 123-125.
31. Al-Quran, 17 : 88, 11 : 13, 10 : 38 and 2 : 23.
32. Cf. Koran, a new translation by N.J. Dawood, admitting this very fact : "It is my belief that the Koran is not only one of the greatest books of prophetic literature but also a literally masterpiece of surpassing excellence (intro, 11).
33. Al-Quran, 2 : 41, 5 : 44, 3: 163.
34. Al-Quran, 6 : 130.
35. Al-Quran. 21: 32, 10 : 67 etc,
36. Al-Quran, 26: 15-51.
37. Al-Quran, 7 : 106-107, 2 : 145, 2: 118 etc.
38. (a) Al-Quran, 3: 148.
(b) Cf. Dictionary of Bible, art. "Miracles".
39. Mishkat, Bab al-Mujizat.
40. (a) Mark, 16 : 20.
(b) Cf. Dictionary of Bible, Edinburgh, 1914, p. 853 "The fourth gospel frequently describes the miracles of Jesus as signs".
41. Kitab al-Muqaddas, printed by Pakistan Bible. Society, (Mark. 16 : 20) London, 1959, N.T., p. 51.
42. Ency. of Religion and Ethics, art. "miracle".
43. ibid.
44. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Religions by E.R. Pike, art. "Bible".
45. For a detailed discussion see Syed Sulaiman Nadavi, sirat-al-Nabi, vol. III, page 213.
46. Ihyā Ulum al-Din, Egypt, 1939, vol. II, p, 384.
47. ibid,
48. Kitab al-Tamheed, Beriut, 1957, p. 132.
49. Umda, p. 17.
50. Kitāb al-Fasl Fil Milal Wal-Ahwa al-Nahal, Egypt, vol. V, p. 2.
51. Al-Quran, 2 : 53 cf. also commentary of al-Baidāwi under al-Quran, 3: 4.
52. Al-Quran, 28 : 32.
53. Al-Quran, 5 : 110.
54. Encyclopaedia of Islam, art. 'Karamat'.
55. Cf. Mathnavi Maulana Rum who presented this idea nicely in his verses.
56. Dr. Syed Hussain Qadiri, Imam Ghazali Ka Falsafa-i-Madhab-o-Akhlaq, Delhi, 1961, p.
57. Ma fil Islam by Prof, Asghar Ali Roohi, vol. I, p. 336 cf. also, Sirat-al-Nabi, vol. II, p. 59.

58. Al-Quran, 16 : 15, Cf. also 13 : 3, 15 : 19, 41 : 10, 50 : 7.
59. Al-Quran, 78 : 7.
60. Al-Quran, 16 : 16.
61. Al-Quran, 28 : 73.
62. Al-Quran, 78 : 9.
63. Al-Quran, 2 : 189.
64. Al-Quran, 25 : 45-49.
65. Al-Quran, 6 : 99.
66. Al-Quran, 36 : 80.
67. Al-Quran, 16 : 5.
68. Al-Quran, 2 : 219.
69. Al-Quran, 16 : 69.
70. Al-Quran, 23 : 115.
71. Al-Quran, 2 : 20.
72. Al-Quran, 11 : 107.
73. Al-Quran, 3 : 40.
74. Encyclopaedia of Religion & Ethics, art. 'Miracle'.
75. James Hastings, Dictionary of Bible, Edinburgh, 1914, art. 'Miracle'.
76. Bukhari, Kitab al-Jami al-Sahih, Leyde, 1908, vol. IV, p. 419.
77. Al-Quran, 98 : 5.
78. Al-Quran, 35 : 24.
79. Al-Quran, 13 : 7.
80. Al-Quran, 16 : 36.
81. Al-Quran, 11 : 25, 11 : 50, 11 : 61, 11 : 84.
82. Al-Quran, 34 : 28.
83. Al-Quran, 11 : 2.
84. Al-Quran, 3 : 164.
85. Al-Quran, 68 : 4.
86. Al-Mishkat, Delhi, 1375 A. H., p. 432.
87. Yusuf Ismail al-Nabhani, Jawahir al-Bahar, vol. I, p. 55.
88. Ihya, vol. 2, p. 384.
89. Bukhari, Al-Jami al-Sahih, chap. Bad-al-Wahi,
90. Qastalni, Jawahir al-Bukhari, Egypt, 1940, p. 4.
91. Al-Quran, 2 : 259.

92. Al-Quran, 2 : 260.
93. Al-Quran, 28 : 30-32.
94. Al-Quran, 17 : 1.
95. Al-Quran, 20 : 70.
96. Al-Quran, 20 : 72-73.
97. Jami Tirmidi, Dehli, vol. II, p. 151. cf. Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, Sirat al-Nabi, vol. 3, p. 5.
98. Al-Quran, 21 : 79.
99. Al-Quran, 21 : 81-82.
100. Al-Quran, 2 : 57.
101. Al-Quran, 2 : 60.
102. Al-Quran, 3 : 49.
103. Al-Quran, 3 : 123-125.
104. Cf. Mishkat, Kitab al-Mujizat.
105. Al-Quran, 8 : 10.
106. Al-Quran, 9 : 25.
107. Al-Quran, 3 : 123.
108. Al-Quran, 12 : 110.
109. Mishkat, Kitab-al-Mujizat, vol. III p. 198 (Muhammād Saeed & Bros, Karachi n.d.) Cf. tr. by James Robson, Part XVI, p. 1286. Cf. Sahih Li Muslim, LAHORE, 1376 A.H., vol. II pp. 253-254.
110. Al-Quran, 6 : 33-34.
111. ibid.
112. Al-Quran, 6-34.
113. Al-Quran, 3 : 137.
114. Al-Quran, 17 : 59.
115. Al-Quran, 21 : 107.
116. Al-fawahir fi Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim, Egypt, 1350 A.H., 2nd ed., vol. II, p. 116.
117. Cf. Sheikh Ahmad Sarhandi, Maktoobat, Amritsar Book I, pt. V, letter No. 292, pp. 112-16.
118. Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, Lahore, 1936, p. 241.
119. Al-Quran, 40 : 78.
120. Al-Quran, 3 : 49, Cf. also 5 : 110 where the permission of Allah is mentioned three times.
121. Al-Mishkat, Kitab al-Mujizat.
122. Al-Quran, 10 : 16, 11 : 62.
123. al-Ghazzali, Al-Munkidh min al-dalal.
124. Al-Quran, 17 : 90-93.

125. Al-Sirat al-Nabawiyya, Egypt, 1936, vol. II, p. 317 ff.
126. Al-Quran, 21 : 26; 17 : 1; 5 : 116-117.
127. Al-Quran, 8 : 10.
128. Muhammad Ali, Religion, of Islam, Lahore, 1950, p. 245.
129. Al-Tabari, Jamial-Bayan un Tawil-i-Aye al-Quran, Egypt, 1347 A.H., vol. II, p. 50.
130. al-Farra al-Baghwi, Maalim al-Tanzil, Bombay, 1283 A.H., p. 26.
131. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf un Haqiq Ghawamiz al-Tanzil wa Uyun al-Aqawil fi Wujuh al-Tawil, Egypt, 1946, vol. I, pp. 101, 102.
132. ibid., p. 139.
133. al-Razi, al-Fakhr, al-Tafsir al-Kabir, Egypt, n.d., vol. III, p. 70.
134. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame li Ahkam al-Quran, Egypt, 1967, vol. I, p. 390.
135. al-Baidawi, Anwar al-Tanzil, Delhi, 1238 A.H., vol. I, p. 54.
136. al-Nasafi, Tafsir al-Nasafi, vol. I, p. 47.
137. al-Khazin, Lubab al-Tawil, Egypt, vol. I, pp. 52-53.
138. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr al-Muhit, Egypt, 1328 A.H., vol. I, p. 198.
139. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Quran Al-Azim, Egypt, 1937, vol. I p. 91.
140. al-Mahalli, al-Jalalain, Delhi, p. 7.
141. al-Suyuti, al-Durr al-Mansoor, n.d., vol. I, p. 69.
142. Abu Saud, Iqad al-Aql al Saleem, vol. I, p. 80.
143. Shah Waliullah, Quran Majeed with Persian trans., Bombay, 1357 A.H., p. 12.
144. al-Shaukani, Fath al-Qadir, Egypt, 2nd ed., 1964, vol. I, p. 83.
145. al-Alusi, Rooh al-Maani, vol. I, p. 212. cf. also Tanwir al-Miqyas Min Tafsir Ibn Abbas, by Ferozabadi, Egypt, 1926, p. 7, explaining the word in this meaning. All have followed him. Cf. also al-Raghib al-Isfahani indicating the difference between "فرق" and "فلق". He says :
"الفرق يقارب الفلق لكن الفلق يقال اعتبارا بالانفصال"
(Mufradat, Karachi, 1961, p. 384).
146. al-Tantawi al-Jawhari, al-Jawahir fi Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim, Egypt, 1350. A.H., vol. I, p. 72.
147. al-Tabarsi, Majma al-Bayan, Beirut, 1957, vol. I, p. 238.
148. Rashid Raza, Tafsir al-Quran al-Hakim (Al-Manar), Egypt, 1373 A.H., vol. I, p. 315.
149. Shah Abdul Qadir, Al-Quran, trans., Cawnpore, 1888, p. 378.
150. Maudoodi, Tafhim al-Quran, Lahore, 1967, vol. I, p. 7.
151. Usmani, Quran un-Majeed, Karachi, 1958, p. 10.
152. al-Tabari, al-Tafsir, vol. VI, p. 386. Cf. also Ibn Qutaiba in Mushkil al-Quran wa Gharibohu, in book al-Quratain, by Ibn Mutraf, Egypt, 1355 A.H., vol. I, p. 99, to say :
"انما كان عقوبة عوقب بها اذ قال الاية بعد مشافهة الملكة"

153. al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 158.
154. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. I, p. 360. Cf. also Ibn Abbas, Tanvir al-Miqyas, Egypt, 1926, p. 38.
155. al-Fakhr al-Razi, al-Tafsir al-Kabir, vol. VIII, p. 43.
156. al-Qurtubi, al-Jame, vol. IV, p. 80.
157. al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol. I, p. 137. Cf. also vol. II, p. 3.
158. al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. I, p. 157.
159. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. I, p. 248.
160. Ibn Abbas explains : "من غير خرس" (Tanvir, Egypt, 1926, p. 38).
161. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. II, p. 451.
162. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. I, p. 362.
163. Suyuti, Jalalain, p. 48.
164. Suyuti, al-Durr al-Mansoor, vol. II p. 21.
165. Abu Saud, Irshad, vol. I, p. 235.
166. Shah Waliullah, Persian trans., p. 489. cf. also p. 88.
167. al-Shaukani, al-Fath al-Qadeer, vol. I, p. 338.
168. al-Alusi, Rooh al-Maani, vol, I, p. 574.
169. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. II, p. 104. cf. also Usmani, Quran, trans., p. 70,
170. al-Jassas al-Razi, Ahkam al-Quran, vol. II, p. 12.
171. al-Tabarsi, Majma al-Bayan, vol. III, p. 76.
172. Shah Abdul Qadir, al-Quran, p. 54.
173. Daryabadi, Holy Quran, vol. I, p. 108.
147. Maudoodi, Tafhim al-Quran, vol. I, p. 250.
175. Usmani, Quran trans., p. 70.
176. al-Tabari, Tafsir, vol. VI, p. 426.
177. ibid., p. 430.
178. ibid., Cf. also al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf vol. I. p. 364. (b) Cf. also al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. VIII p. 60. (c) Cf. also al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol. I, p. 138. (d) Cf. also al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. II, p. 32.
179. ibid., p. 432.
180. Al-Farra al-Baghwi, Maalim, pp. 159-160. Cf. also al-Shaukani, Fath al-Qadeer, vol. I, p. 343.
181. ibid., p. 160.
182. ibid.
183. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. I, p. 364. cf. also. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. II, p. 467.
184. ibid., p. 364-365. Cf. also al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. VIII p. 62 cf. also al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. II, p. 106. Cf. also Ibn Abbas, Tanwir, pp. 38-39.

185. al-Fakhr al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. VIII, p. 60.
186. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. IV, pp. 94-95.
187. al-Nasafi, al-Madarak, vol. I, p. 159. cf. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. I, p. 252. cf. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. II, pp. 466-467.
188. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. I, p. 365, Cf. also al-Mahalli, al-Jalalain, p. 49.
189. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. I, p. 588.
190. Shah Waliullah, Quran Majeed with Persian trans., Bombay, 1357 A.H., p. 89.
191. Shah Abdul Qadir, Urdu trans., Cawnpore, 1888, pp. 54-55.
192. Maudoodi, Tafhim, Lahore, 1967, vol. I, pp. 252-53, also p. 513. Cf. Usmani, al-Quran, Karachi, 1958, p. 72.
- 192A. A. ibid.
193. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 103.
194. al-Tabari, Tafsir, vol. XII, p. 502.
195. al-Baghwi, Maalim, Bombay, 1283 A.H., p. 343.
196. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. II, p. 115.
197. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XIV, p. 153.
198. al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol. I, p. 286.
199. al-Nasafi, al-Tafsir, vol. II, p. 59.
200. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. II, p. 108.
201. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. IV, p. 323. Cf. also al-Shaukani, Fath al-Qadeer, vol. II, p. 217.
202. Ibn Kathir, al-Tafsir, vol. II, p. 223.
203. ibid.
204. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, Delhi, p. 133.
205. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. III, p. 94.
206. al-Tabarsi, Majma al-Bayan, vol. VIII, p. 89.
207. Shah Waliullah, Quran trans., p. 254.
208. al-Alusi, Rooh, (Egypt 1301 A.H.) vol. III, p. 61.
209. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. IV, pp. 186-187.
210. Shah Abdul Qadir, al-Quran, urdu trans., p. 158. Cf. also Abdul Majid Daryabadi, Holy Quran. Eng. trans., p. 276. Cf. also Rashid Raza, al-Manar, vol. VIII, p. 494. Cf. also Usmani, Quran Majeed, Urdu trans., p. 211:
211. Maudoodi, Tafhim, vol. II, p. 44.
212. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, Egypt, 1926, p. 104.
213. al-Tabari, Tafsir, vol. XII, p. 502.
214. al-Baghwi, Maalim, Bombay, 1283 A.H., p. 343.

215. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. II, p. 119. Cf. also al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. II pp. 60-61
216. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XIV, p. 160.
217. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, Egypt, 1967, vol. VII, p. 237.
218. al-Baidawi, Anwar, Delhi, 1283 A.H., vol. I, p. 287.
219. al-Tabarsi, Majma, Beirut, vol. VIII, p. 96.
220. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. II, p. 109.
221. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. IV, p. 326.
222. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 225.
223. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, p. 133.
224. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. III, p. 65.
225. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. III, p. 96. Cf. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. II, p. 219.
226. Shah Waliullah, Persian trans., p. 255.
Cf. also Shah Abdul Qadir, al-Quran, p. 159.
Cf. also Usmani, Quran Majeed, p. 212.
Cf. also Daryabadl, Holy Quran, p. 227.
Cf. also Maudoodi, Tafhim, vol. II, p. 47.
227. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. IV, p. 192.
228. Rashid Raza, al-Manar, vol. VIII, p. 402.
229. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 104.
230. al-Tabari, Tafsir, vol. XII, p. 545.
231. al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 345.
332. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. II, p. 124
233. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XIV, p. 166.
234. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. VII, p. 242.
235. al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol. I, pp. 288-289.
236. al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 62.
237. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. II, p. 113.
238. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. IV, p. 332.
239. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 229.
240. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, Delhi, p. 134.
241. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. III, p. 98.
242. al-Tabarsi, Majma, vol. VIII, p. 102.
243. Shah Waliullah, Persian trans., p. 256.
244. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. II, p. 220.
245. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. III, p. 70.

246. alTantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. IV, p. 193.
247. Shah Abdul Qadir, Urdu trans., p. 159.
248. Daryabadi, Eng. trans., p. 278.
249. Usmani, Urdu trans., p. 213.
250. Maudoodi, Tafhim, vol. II, p. 50.
251. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 104.
252. al-Tabari, Tafsir, vol. XII, p. 553. Cf. also al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 348.
253. al-Zamakhsari, al-Kashshaf, vol. II, p. 126.
254. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XIV, p. 171.
255. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. VII, p. 247.
256. al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol. I, p. 289.
257. al-Nasāfi, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 63.
258. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. II, p. 118.
259. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. IV, p. 335.
260. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 231.
261. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, p. 134.
262. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. III, p. 100.
263. al-Tabarsi, Majma, vol. VIII, p. 110.
264. Shah Waliullah, Persian trans., p. 258.
265. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. II, p. 222.
266. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. III, p. 74.
267. al-Tantawi, vol. IV, p. 197.
268. Shah Abdul Qadir,
269. Daryabadi, Eng. trans., pp. 279-280.
270. Maudoodi, Tafhim, vol. II, p. 53.
271. Usmani, trans., p. 214.
272. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 105.
273. al-Tabari, Tafsir, vol. XII, p. 566.
274. al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 349.
275. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. II, p. 131.
276. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XIV, p. 181.
277. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. VII, p. 251.
278. al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol. I, p. 291.
279. al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 65.
280. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. II, p. 120.

281. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. IV, p. 346.
282. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 232.
283. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, p. 135.
284. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. III, p. 102.
285. al-Tabarsi, Majma, vol. VIII, p. 121.
286. Shah Waliullah, trans., p. 259.
287. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. II, p. 226.
288. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. III, p. 83.
289. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. IV, p. 199.
290. Rashid Raza, al-Manar, vol. IX, p. 199.
- 291; Shah Abdul Qadir, trans., p. 161.
292. Daryabodi, Eng. trans., p. 281.
293. Maudoodi, Tafhim, vol. II, p. 58.
294. Usmani, trans., p. 215.
295. Ibn Abbas. Tanvir, p. 106.
296. al-Tabari, Tafsir, vol. XIII, p. 15.
297. ibid., p. 16. Cf. also Ibn Qutaiba, al-Qurtain, Egypt, 1356 A.H., vol. II, p. 8.
298. al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 350.
299. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. II, p. 138.
300. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XIV, p. 192.
301. ibid., pp. 193-195.
302. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. VII, p. 257.
303. ibid., p. 259.
304. al-Baidawi, Anwar. p. 293.
305. al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 68.
306. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. II, p. 124.
307. Abu Hayyan al-Bahr, vol. IV, p. 357.
308. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 236.
309. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, p. 136.
310. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. III, p. 105.
311. al-Tabarsi, Majma, vol. VIII, p. 137.
312. Shah Waliullah, Persian trans., p. 263.
213. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. II, p. 231.
314. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. III, p. 94. He cites a nice conclusion from the word **مبين** as follows :
- ” (مبين) ای ظاهر امره لا يشك في كونه ثعبانا فهو اشارة الى أن الصيرورة حقيقة لا تخيلية“.
- (Ibid., P. 94.)

315. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. IV, p. 208.
316. Shah Abdul Qadir, trans., p. 163.
317. Maudoodi, Tafhim, vol. II, p. 65.
318. Usmani, trans., p. 217.
319. Daryabadi, Eng. trans., vol. I, p. 283.
320. Rashid Raza, al-Manar, vol. IX, p. 44.
321. ibid., p. 68.
322. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 106.
323. al-Tabari, Tafsir, vol. XIII, p. 17.
324. al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 350.
325. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. II, p. 138.
326. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XIV, p. 196.
327. ibid., p. 206.
328. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. VII, p. 257. Cf. Ibn Qataiba, al-Qurtain, vol. II, p. 8.
329. al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol. I, p. 292. Cf. also vol. II, p. 120.
330. al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 68.
331. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. II, p. 125.
332. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. IV, p. 357.
333. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 236.
334. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, p. 136.
335. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. III, p. 105.
336. al-Tabarsi, Majma, vol. VIII, p. 137.
337. Shah Waliullah, Persian trans., p. 263.
338. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. II, p. 231.
339. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. III, p. 94.
340. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. IV, p. 208.
341. Rashid Raza, al-Manar, vol. IX, p. 44.
342. Shah Abdul Qadir, trans., p. 163.
343. Maudoodi, Tafhim, vol. II, p. 65.
344. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 39. Cf. also p. 90, his interpretation :
 ”قضاء كائنا ان يكون ولدا بلا اب“-
345. al-Tabari, Tafsir, vol. VI, pp. 420-21. Cf. also pt. XVI, p. 62.
346. al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 566.

Cf. Jassas al-Razi, explaining the word كلمة in this connection :

”فلما كان خلقه على هذا الوجه من غير والد اطلق عليه اسم الكلمة مجازاً“

(Ahkam al-Quran, vol. II, p. 14).

Cf. al-Raghib al-Isfahani, Mufradat, Karachi, 1961, p. 455. to say :

”وتسمية عيسى بكلمة في هذه الآية و في قوله وكلمة القاها الى مريم لكونه موجودا بكن المذكور
في قوله ان مثل عيسى الآية“ -

347. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. III, p. 13.

(Cf. Ibn Arabi, Ahkam, vol. II, p. 56. cf. also Ibid., vol. I, p. 440).

348. ibid., p. 15.

349. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XXI, p. 202.

350. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. XI, pp. 91-93.

351. al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol. II, p. 4.

352. al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. III, p. 31.

353. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. III, p. 232.

354. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. VI, p. 179.

355. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. III, p. 116.

356. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, p. 253.

357. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. IV, p. 266.

Cf. Ibn Arabi, Ahkam, vol. II, p. 56. He states :

”ودخلت بيت لحم مئة وخمسة وثمانين واربعمائة فرأيت في متعبدتهم غارا عليه جذع يابس كان
رهبانهم يذكرون انه جذع مريم باجماع“

358. al-Tabarsi, Majma, vol. XVI, p. 23.

359. Abu Saud, Irshad al-Aql al-Saleem.

360. Shah Waliullah, Persian trans., pp. 490-491.

361. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. III, p. 338.

Cf. al-Aiusi, Rooh, vol. V, p. 168.

362. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. X, p. 8.

363. Ibid., vol. X, p. 17.

364. ibid., p. 16.

365. ibid., p. 18.

366. Rashid Raza, al-Manar.

367. ibid., p. 309.

368. Shah Abdul Qadir, urdu trans., p. 309.

369. Daryabadi, eng. trans., vol. II, p. 496.

370. Maulana Thanwi, Bayan, vol. VII, p. 4.

371. Usmani, Urdu trans., p. 408.

372. Maudoodi, Taflim, vol. I, p. 252.

373. ibid., vol. III, p. 67.

374. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 203. Cf. Ibn Qutaiba, al-Qurtain, vol. II, p. 21. (He explains :

(كونى برداً و سلاماً على ابراهيم) اى و سلامة اى لا تكون برداً مؤذياً مضرراً).

375. al-Tabari, Tafsir, pt. XVII, pp. 43-44.
 376. ibid., p. 44.
 377. al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 589.
 378. al-Zamakhshari, vol. III, pp. 125-126.
 379. ibid., p. 126.
 380. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XXII, p. 189.
 381. ibid.
 382. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. XI, p. 304.
 383. al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol. II, p. 39.
 384. ibid., p. 39.
 385. al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. III, p. 84.
 386. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. III, pp. 282-283.
 387. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. VI, p. 328.
 388. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. III, p. 184.
 389. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, p. 272.
 390. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. IV, p. 322.
 391. al-Tabarsi, Majma, vol. VII, p. 41.
 392. ibid., p. 41.
 393. ibid., p. 41.
 394. Shah Waliullah, Persian trans., p. 523.
 395. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. III, p. 415.
 396. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. V, p. 373.
 397. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. X, pp. 226-228.
 398. Shah Abdul Qadir, Urdu trans., p. 332.
 399. Daryabadi, Eng. trans., vol. II, p. 528.
 400. Thanwi, Bayan, vol. VII, p. 51.
 401. Usmani, Urdu trans., p. 436.
 402. Maudoodi, Tafhim, vol. III, p. 169.
 403. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 235.
 404. al-Tabari, Tafsir, Pt. XIX, p. 142 (Egypt 1954).
 405. al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 655.
 406. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. III, p. 356.
 407. ibid., p. 356. Cf. Abu Hayyan who refutes this as such :

”والحق التاء في قالت لا يدل على أن النملة مؤنث بل يصح ان يقال في المذكر قالت نملة
 وان كان بالقاء هو معالا يتميز فيه المذكر والمؤنث وما كان كذلك كالنملة والقملة“

(Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. VII, p. 61). -

408. Al-Razi, Tafsir, vol. XXIV, p. 187.
409. al Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. XIII, p. 171.
410. al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol. II, 121.
411. al Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. III, p. 206.
412. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. III, p. 405.
413. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. VII, p. 61.
414. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. III, p. 359.
415. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, p. 316.
416. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. V, p. 104.
417. al-Tabarsi, Majma, vol. XIX, p. 207.
418. ibid., p. 207.
419. Shah Waliullah, Persian trans., p. 605.
420. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. IV, p. 131.
421. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. VI, p. 268.
422. ibid., p. 268.
423. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. III, p. 136.
424. Shah Abdul Qadir, Urdu trans., p. 387.
425. Daryabadi, Eng. trans., vol. II, p. 607.
426. Thanwi, Bayan, vol. VIII, p. 83.
427. Usmani, Urdu trans., p. 504.
428. Maudoodi, Tafhim, vol. III, p. 565.
429. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 236. Cf. also Ibn Qutaiba, al-Qurtain, vol. II, pp. 57-58.
430. al-Tabari, Tafsir, pt. XIX, p. 160.
431. al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 663.
432. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. III, p. 368.
433. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XXIV, p. 198.
434. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. XIII, p. 206.
435. ibid., p. 206.
436. al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol. II, p. 125.
437. al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. III, p. 213.
438. al-Khazin, Lubab, Vol. III, p. 412.
439. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. VII, p. 77.
440. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. III, p. 364 (He also indicates that Solomon himself intended to show his power and greatness to the Queen and her nation in order to establish his prophethood).

441. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, p. 319.
442. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. V, p. 107.
443. al-Tabarsi, Majma, Vol. XIX, pp. 226-228.
444. Shah Waliullah, Persian trans., p. 608.
445. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. IV, p. 139.
446. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. VI, p. 289.
447. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. XIII, p. 168.
448. ibid., p. 169.
449. Shah Abdul Qadir, Urdu trans., pp. 388, 389.
450. Darayabadi, Eng. trans., vol. II, p. 611.
451. Thanwi, Bayan, vol. VIII, p. 88.
452. Usmani, urdu trans., p. 506.
453. Maudoodi. Tafhim, vol. III, p. 577.
454. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 176.
455. al-Tabari, Tafsir, Egypt, 1954, Pt. XV, p. 16.
456. ibid. pp. 16-17.
457. ibid., p. 17.
458. al-Baghawi, Maalim, p. 515.
459. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. II, p. 646.
460. ibid., p.p. 647-48.
461. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XX, p. 147.
462. al-Razi, al-Tafsir vol. XX, p. 148.
463. ibid., p. 150.
464. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. X, p. 205.
465. ibid., p. 205.
466. ibid., p. 209.
467. Ibn Arabi, Kitab Ahkam al-Quran, Egypt, 1331, A.H., vol. II, p. 32.
468. al-Baidawi, Anwar, pp. 456-457.
469. al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 306.
- 469-A. ibid., p. 306.
470. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. III, p. 154.
471. ibid., pp. 158, 159.
472. ibid., p. 160.
473. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. VI, p. 5.
474. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. III, p. 22.
475. al-Mahalli. Jalalain, pp. 226-228.

476. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. IV, p. 136
477. al-Tabarsi, Majma, vol. XV, p. 8.
478. Mulla Jiwan, al-Tafsirat al-Ahmadiyya, Calcutta. 1263, A.H., p. 408.
479. Shah Waliullah, Persian trans., p. 451.
480. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. III, p. 207.
481. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. IV, p. 470.
482. ibid., p. 474.
483. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. IX, p. 15.
484. Ibid., p. 22.
485. Shah Abdul Qadir, trans., p. 282.
486. Maulana Maudoodi, Tafhim, vol. II, p. 589.
487. Usmani, trans.. p. 373. Cf. Daryabadi, Eng. trans., vol. I I, p. 457. (He remarks that (لِي) is added to emphasize the miraculous nature of the act).
488. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 334.
489. al-Taburi, Tafsir, pt. XXVII. p. 84. Cf. al-Jassas, Ahkam, vol. III, p. 414.
490. al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 862.
491. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. IV, p. 430. cf. Sahih Muslim, Lahore, 1376 A.H., vol. II, p. 381.
492. ibid., vol. IV, p. 431.
493. al-Razi, al-Tafsir. vol. XXIX, p. 28.
494. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. XVII, p. 126.
495. al-Baidawi, Anwar, vol, II, p. 334.
496. al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. IV, p. 201.
497. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. IV, p. 216.
498. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. VIII, p. 173.
499. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. IV, p. 263.
500. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, p. 438.
501. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, Vol. VI, pp. 132-133. (He has also given the names of pagans who saw it.
502. al-Tabarsi, Majma, vol. XXVII, p. 66.
503. Shah Waliullah, Persian, trans., p. 845.
504. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. V, p. 120.
505. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. VIII, pp. 270-273.
506. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. XXIII, p. 241.
507. Shah Abdul Qadir, Urdu trans., p. 546.
508. Daryabadi, Eng. trans.. vol. II, p. 838.

509. Thanwi, Bayan, vol. XI, p. 81.
510. Usmani- Urdu trans., p. 701.
511. Ibn Abbas, Tanvir, p. 181.
512. al-Tabari, Tafsir, Egypt, 1347 A.H., vol. I, p. 373.
513. ibid., (1954) Pt. XV, p. 159. Cf. al-Jassas: Ahkam, vol. I, p. 28.
514. al-Baghwi, Maalim, p. 537.
515. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. I, p. 96. Cf. also vol. II, p. 692. under 17 : 88.
516. al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf, vol. I, pp. 101, 102.
517. al-Razi, al-Tafsir, vol. XXI, p. 54.
518. al-Qurtabi, al-Jame, vol. I, pp. 69-75. Cf. al-Baidawi. Anwar, vol. I, p. 34. Cf. al-Nasafi, Tafsir, vol. III, p. 327.
519. al-Khazin, Lubab, vol. III, p. 191.
520. Abu Hayyan, al-Bahr, vol. VI, p. 77.
521. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir, vol. III, p. 62.
522. al-Mahalli, Jalalain, p. 4.
523. al-Suyuti, al-Durr, vol. IV, p. 202.
524. al-Tabarsi, Majma, vol. XV, p. 95.
525. Shah Waliullah. persian trans., pp. 465-466.
526. al-Shaukani, Fath, vol. III, p. 257. Cf. also vol. I, p. 53. Cf. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. IX, p. 81.
527. al-Alusi, Rooh, vol. IV, p. 591.
528. Rashid Raza, al-Manar, vol. I, p. 191.
529. Shah Abdul Qadir, Urdu trans., p. 292.
530. Daryabadi, Eng. trans., vol. II, p. 472.
531. Daryabadi, Eng. trans., vol. I, p. 7. (He has also quoted Hitti to say: "This book, a strong living voice, is meant for oral recitation and should be heard in the original to be appreciated. No small measure of its force lies in its rhyme and rhetoric and in a cadence and sweep, which cannot be reproduced in translation without loss". Cf. also Maulana Maudoodi, Tafhim, vol. I, p. 7.
532. Usmani, Urdu trans., p. 6.

Chapter II

MIRACLES OF PROPHETS MENTIONED IN THE
QURAN—MIRACLES OF MOSES—MIRACLES OF
JESUS—MIRACLES OF OTHER PROPHETS—
MIRACLES OF THE HOLY PROPHET (P.B.U.H.)
IN THE QURAN

Chapter II

MIRACLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
QURAN--MIRACLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
JESUS--MIRACLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
MIRACLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
IN THE QURAN

In the first chapter of this research work the Quranic concept of miracle has been discussed and the traditional or orthodox exegesis of some popular miracles by the celebrated scholars and commentators of the Holy Quran has been given. In this chapter miracles of the various prophets have been mentioned in detail. As at the time of revelation of the Quran two religions, Judaism and Christianity, prevailed in Arabia the Arabs knew something about these two religions. The Quran has, therefore, mentioned mostly the miracles of Moses and Jesus. The miracles of other Prophets have also been mentioned in the Holy Quran briefly. I have discussed the miracles of Moses first and then those of Jesus and after those I have stated the miracles of other prophets, and lastly I have given an account of the miracles of the last of the Prophets (peace be upon him and them).

The miracles are so wrought in the Quran that they are inseparable from it. *To establish its truth and prove its credibility let the Holy text speak for itself.*

The Holy Quran mentions the miracles of Moses and Divine favours on Israel and complains about their rebellious nature and stubbornness. It reminds them that God made them excel the nations and delivered them from Pharaoh and his people who subjected them to severe torments killing their sons and sparing their daughters for their use. It was a great trial for them when Divine help came and rescued them from Pharaoh. The Holy Quran mentions this favour which appeared in the form of a miracle :

“And lo ! We parted the sea for you ; so We saved you and drowned the followers of Pharaoh and you watched by”.¹

This event of their deliverance is mentioned on another occasion some what in detail :

“Therefore, We inflicted retribution on them and drowned them in the sea because they rejected Our signs and were heedless of them, And We made the people who were deemed weak to inherit the eastern lands and the western ones which We had blessed ; and the good word of your Lord was fulfilled in the children of Israel because they bore up (sufferings) patiently ;

and We utterly destroyed what Pharaoh and his people had wrought and what they built. And We made the children of Israel to cross the sea".²

The Holy Quran mentions why Pharaoh and his people were drowned :

"In the manner of the people of Pharaoh and those before them ; they rejected the communications of their Lord, therefore, We destroyed them on account of their faults and We drowned Pharaoh's people and they were all wrong-doers".³

The Holy Quran mentions that in the agonies of death, Pharaoh who had rejected God, recognized the existence of God Who bestowed His favours on Israelities :

"And We made the children of Israel to pass through the sea, then Pharaoh and his hosts followed them for oppression and tyranny ; until when drowning overtook him, he said : I believe that there is no God but He in Whom the children of Israel believed and I am of those who submit. What ! Now ! and indeed you disobeyed before and you were of the mischief-makers. But We will this day deliver you with your body that you may be a sign to those after you and most surely the majority of the people are heedless to Our communications".⁴

The Holy Quran mentions that when Moses said to Pharaoh that he truly knew that none but the Lord of heavens and the earth had sent down clear proofs and warned Pharaoh that if he rejected these signs he would be given over to perdition : "So Pharaoh desired to destroy them out of the earth, but We drowned him and those with him altogether".⁵

The Holy Quran further mentions the deliverance of children of Israel that Moses was ordered by God to take them from the Egypt and cross the sea :

"And certainly We revealed to Moses, saying : Travel by night with my servants, then make for them a dry path in the sea, not fearing to be overtaken, nor being afraid. And Pharaoh followed them with his armies. So there came upon them of the sea that which came upon them".⁶

It was quite natural for the children of Israel to be afraid despite the instruction and assurance of help. The Holy Quran describes the Phenomenon in the following verses :

"Then they pursued them at sunrise. So when the two hosts saw each other, the companions of Moses cried out : Most surely we are being overtaken. He said : By no means ; surely my Lord is with me. He will show me a way out. Then We revealed to Moses : Strike the sea with your staff.

So it had cloven asunder and each wave was like a huge mound. And We brought near, there, the others. And We saved Moses and those with him, all of them. Then We drowned the others. Most surely there is a sign in this, but most of them do not believe".⁷

The Holy Quran mentions this event as a proof of what would be the end of the unjust :

"So We caught hold of him and his hosts then We cast them into the sea, and see how was the end of the unjust".⁸

The Holy Quran has described Pharaoh's opposition to Moses and his canvassing his people and mocking at Moses .

"And Pharaoh proclaimed amongst his people : O my people : is not the kingdom of Egypt mine ? And these rivers flow beneath me ; do you not then see ? I am better than this fellow, who is contemptible and who can hardly speak distinctly : But why have not bracelets of gold been put upon him⁹, or why have there not come with him angels as companions. So he incited his people to levity and they obeyed him. Surely they were a transgressing people. Then when they displeased Us, We inflicted retribution on them, so We drowned them altogether. And We made them a precedent and example to the later generations".¹⁰

The Holy Quran, explains this great event of the deliverance of children of Israel and drowning and destruction of Pharaoh in such a manner that there remains no doubt at all that an apparent miracle took place. God's promise to children of Israel, Pharaoh's opposition to Moses, warning of Moses to Pharaoh, order of God to Moses to take Israelites by the night and cross the sea, fear of Israelites, assurance of Moses, striking the rod on the sea making it a dry path by the order of God, cry of Pharaoh in agonies of death to accept God of Israelites and his drastic end clearly indicate and prove it to be a miracle.

THUNDER

Almighty God, while reminding Israel of His Divine favours, also mentions their stubbornness. The Holy Quran says :

"And when you said : O Moses : We will not believe in you until we see Allah manifestly, so the punishment overtook you while you looked on. Then We raised you up after death that you may give thanks."¹¹

On another occasion, when the people of the book insist on their foolish demand, the Holy Quran mentions the transgression of the Jews and says that they are not sincere and that they even violated the covenant and they had already made such demands to their own prophet, Moses :

“The followers of the Book ask you to bring down to them a book from heaven ; so indeed they demanded of Moses a greater thing than that, for they said ; Show us Allah manifestly : So : the rumbling overtook them on account of their injustice.¹²

MANNA AND QUAILS

Reminding His Divine favours on Israel, God says :

“And We made the clouds to give shade over you and We sent to you manna and quails. Eat of the good things that We have given you ; and they did not do Us any harm, but they made their own souls suffer the loss”.¹³

The above-mentioned gifts, bestowed by Allah in the wilderness on Israel were granted to them freely without any exertion on their part, but they did not thank God. The Holy Quran mentions the same :

“And We made the clouds give shade over them and We sent to them manna and quails. Eat of the good things We have given you and they did not do Us any harm but they did injustice to their own souls”.¹⁴

In somewhat detailed account of Moses, the Holy Quran has mentioned this divine favour on Israel and their defiance in spite of these favours :

“O Children of Israel ! indeed We delivered you from your enemy and We made a covenant with you on the blessed side of the mountain, and We sent to you the manna and the quails. Eat of the good things We have given you for sustenance and be not inordinate with respect to them, lest my wrath should befall you, and whomsoever earns My wrath shall perish indeed”.¹⁵

TWELVE SPRINGS

One of the Divine favours on the Children of Israel was the gushing forth of twelve springs. The Holy Quran says :

“And when Moses prayed for drink for his people, We said : “Strike the rock with your staff. So there flowed from it twelve springs ; each tribe knew its drinking place : Eat and drink of the provisions of Allah, and do not act corruptly in the land making mischief”.¹⁶

Revealing the history of Moses to the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.), God

mentions His favours on Israelites :

“And We divided them into twelve tribes, as nations ; and We revealed to Moses when his people asked him for water “Strike the rock with your staff. So out flowed from it twelve springs ; each tribe knew its drinking place”.¹⁷

RAISING THE MOUNTAIN ON ISRAELITES

Mentioning Israelites degeneration on account of thir stubbornness and transgression and violation of their covenant God says :

“And when We made a covenant with you and raised the mountain above you. Take hold of what We have given you with firmness, and bear in mind what is in it, so that you may guard (against evil). Then you turned back after that”.¹⁸

Further, He says :

“And when We made a covenant with you and raised the mountain above you. Take hold of what We have given you with firmness and be obedient. They said : “We hear and disobey”.¹⁹

Raising the mountain above them at their covenant is mentioned briefly in Sura al-Nisa²⁰, while in Sura al-A'raf, the event has been stated somewhat in detail. The Holy Quran says :

“And when We shook the mountain over them as if it were a covering overhead, and they thought that it was going to fall down upon them. Take hold of what We have given you with firmness, and be mindful of what is in it, so that you may guard (against evil)”.²¹

CURSE OF METAMORPHOSING INTO APES

On violating the Divine commandments and profaning the Sabbath, a curse overtook the Prophet's (Moses) enemies from among the Jews and they were metamorphosed into apes. The Holy Quran mentions this in the following words :

“And certainly you have known those among you who exceeded the limits of the Sabbath, so We said to them : ‘Be apes, despised and hated’. “So we made them an example to those who witnessed it and those who came after it and an admonition to those who guard (against evil)”.²²

The Holy Quran, revealing the mischiefs of hypocritical Jews, who mocked at the call to the prayer and used to find faults with the believers, reminds them of their gloomy past and their transgression and the destructive punishment and curse of Allah which overtook them :

“Say : Shall I inform you of (him who is) worse than this in retribution from Allah ? (worse is he) whom Allah has cursed and brought His wrath upon them and of whom He made apes and swine, and he who served the devil : These are worse in place and more erring from the straight path”.²³

The Holy Quran explicitly shows that (not all of them but some of them using the word (أقوام) were metamorphosed into apes and swines by the curse of God and some others served the devil and were deprived of the mercy of God. This event, is mentioned, somewhat in detail, in the Holy Quran in Chapter VII :

“And ask them about the town which stood by the sea ; when they exceeded the limits of Sabbath, when their fish came to them on the day of their Sabbath, appearing on the surface of the water, and on the day on which they did not keep the Sabbath they did not come to them ; thus did We try them because they transgressed. And when a party of them said: Why do you admonish a people whom Allah would destroy or whom He would chastise with a severe chastisement ? They said : To be free from blame before your Lord, and that haply they may guard (against evil). So when they neglected what they had been reminded of, We delivered those who forbade evil and we overtook those who were unjust with an evil chastisement because they transgressed. Therefore, when they revoltingly persisted in what they had been forbidden, We said to them : Be apes, despised and hated”.²⁴

GUILT OF MURDER

The Holy Quran describes the hard-heartedness of the Jews despite seeing His signs and points out to a celebrated event when some Jews killed a great man and tried to conceal the crime. But God brought the dead to life and disclosed their mischief :

“And when you killed a man, then you blamed each other with respect to that, and Allah was to bring forth that which you were going to hide. So We said : Strike him with somewhat of it. Thus Allah brings the dead to life, and He shows you His signs that you may understand. Then your hearts hardened after that”.²⁵

BOX IN WHICH THERE WAS TRANQUILITY

The Holy Quran which shows the necessity of fighting in the cause of truth, mentions certain events from Jewish History e.g. Jews refused to fight when enjoined to do so by their prophet who said to them that Allah had raised Saul to be a king over them, but they rejected his kingship because of his poverty and did not

show regard for his superiority in knowledge and physique. So a sign was given :

“And their prophet said to them : Surely the sign of his kingdom is that there shall come to you the box in which there is tranquility from your Lord and the residue of what the followers of Moses and the followers of Aaron have left, the angles bearing it, most surely there is a sign in this for you if you are believers”²⁶

WANDERING ABOUT IN THE LAND FOR FORTY YEARS

Whom Moses reminded Israelites of the Divine favours of Allah that He raised prophets among them and made them kings and gave them what He had not given to any other nation, and commanded them to march on the Holy Land, but they refused to do so saying : “go therefore, you and your Lord, then fight you both, surely we will here sit down”. So a punishment from Allah overtook them and they were deprived of this blessing for full forty years. The Holy Quran says :

“He said : So it shall surely be forbidden to them for forty years, they shall wander over the land, therefore, do not grieve for the nation of transgressors”²⁷.

MOSES' STAFF AND WHITE HAND

The Holy Quran describes vividly the event when Moses delivers Divine message to Pharaoh. Pharaoh demands signs from Moses who shows wonderful signs which turn the fate of Pharaoh and a new chapter of Jewish history opens :

“And Moses said : O' Pharaoh : Surely I am a prophet from the Lord of the worlds. (I am) worthy of not saying anything about Allah except the truth : I have come to you indeed with clear proof from your Lord, therefore, send with me the children of Israel. He said : If you have come with a sign, then bring it, if you are of the truthful ones. So he threw his staff then lo : it was obviously a serpent. And he drew forth his hand, and lo : it was white to the beholders. The chiefs of Pharaoh's people said : Most surely this is an enchanter excelling in knowledge. He intends to turn you out of your land. What counsel do you then give? They said : Put him off and his brother, and send messengers into the cities. That they may bring to you every enchanter possessing knowledge. And the enchanters came to Pharaoh (and) said : We must surely have a reward if we are victorious. He said : Yes, and you shall certainly be of those who are near (to me). They said : O' Moses ! Will you cast or shall we be the first to cast? He said : Cast. So when they cast, they deceived the peoples' eyes and frightened them and they produced a mighty enchantment. And We revealed to Moses, saying : Cast your staff then lo : it devoured the falsehood they had made. So the truth was established, and what they did, became

null and void. Thus they were vanquished there, and they went back abased. And the enchanters were thrown down, prostrating (themselves). They said : We believe in the Lord of the Worlds. The Lord of Moses and Aaron. Pharaoh said: Do you believe in Him before I have given you permission? Surely this is a plot you have secretly devised in this city, that you may turn out of it its people, but you shall know : I will certainly cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, then will I crucify you all together, They said : Surely to our Lord shall we go back. And you do not take revenge on us except because we have believed in the signs of our Lord when they came to us. Our Lord ! bestow upon us patience and cause us to die in submission".²⁸

In Sura Yunus where the truth of revelation and uniqueness of Divine gifts is stated reference is made to Jewish history, and the summary of above-mentioned event is given :

"Then did We send up after them Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh and his chiefs with Our signs, but they showed pride and they were a guilty people. So when the truth came to them from Us they said : This is most surely clear enchantment. Moses said: Do you say (this) of the truth when it has come to you? Is it enchantment? And the enchanters are not successful. They said: Have you come to us to turn us away from what we found our fathers upon, and (that) greatness in the land should be for you two? And we are not going to believe in you. And Pharaoh said : Bring to me every skilful enchanter. And when the enchanters came, Moses said to them : Cast down what you have to cast. So when they cast down Moses said to them : What you have brought is deception : surely Allah will make it naught. Surely Allah does not make the work of mischief-makers to thrive. And Allah will show the truth to be the truth by His words, though the guilty may be averse (to it)":²⁹

In the above verses the general character of the event has been stated. The Holy Quran stresses the establishment of the truth and the physical nature of the event is only referred to.

In Sura Tāhā the Holy Quran, not only indicates the event when the two great signs were bestowed upon Moses but also gives a detailed account of the wonderful miracle which took place on the day of Festival : The first event takes place when Moses takes his family home and happens to pass through the sacred valley. He saw a fire, and asking his family to stop, when he came to it, a voice was heard : O' Moses, surely I am your Lord. Then God told Moses that He chose Moses as Prophet and commanded him to serve Him and keep up prayer for His remembrance.

The Holy Quran describes the bestowing of the two wonderful miracles on Moses at this time :

“And what is this in your right hand ? O'Moses ! He said : This is my staff. I recline on it and I beat the leaves with it to make them fall upon my sheep, and I have other uses of it. He said : cast it down, O Moses ! So he cast it down, and lo : it was a serpent running. He said : Take hold of it and fear not ; We will restore it to its former state. And press your hand to your side, it shall come out white without blemish another sign. That We may show you of Our greater signs. Go to Pharaoh, surely he has transgressed all the limits”³⁰

Moses asks favours which are granted, and at the same time God reminds His early favours already bestowed on Moses before. Moses came to Pharaoh and delivered a detailed Divine message (20 : 47-55) and now the miracle is described in detail :

“And truly We showed him Our signs, all of them, but he rejected and refused. Said he : Have you come to us that you should turn us out of our land by your enchantment, O Moses ? So we too will produce before you enchantment like it, therefore, make between us and you an appointment, which we should not break (neither) we nor you, (in) a central place. (Moses) said : Your appointment is the day of the Festival, and let the people be gathered together in the early fore-noon. So Pharaoh turned his back and settled his plan, then came. Moses said to them : Woe to you ; do not forge a lie against Allah, lest He destroy you by a chastisement, and he who forges (a lie) indeed fails to attain (his desire). So they disputed with one another about their affair and kept the discourse secret. They said : There are most surely two enchanters who wish to turn you out from your land by their enchantment and to take away your most exemplary usage. Therefore settle your plan, then come standing in ranks, and he will prosper indeed this day who overcomes. They said : O Moses : Will you cast, or shall we be the first who cast down ? He said : Nay : Cast down. Then lo ! their cords and their rods it was imaged to him on account of their enchantment as if they were running. So Moses conceived in his mind a fear. We said : Fear not, surely you shall be the uppermost. And cast down what is in your right hand : it shall devour what they have wrought ; they have wrought only the plan of an enchanter, and the enchanter shall not be successful wheresoever he may come from. And the enchanters were cast down making obeisance ; they said ; We believe in the Lord of Aaron and Moses. (Pharaoh) said : You believe in him before I give you leave ; most surely he is the chief of you who taught you

enchantment, therefore, I will certainly cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and I will certainly crucify you on the trunks of the palm trees, and certainly you will come to know which of us is the more severe and the more abiding in chastising. They said : We do not prefer you to what has come to us of clear arguments and to Him who made us, therefore, decide what you are going to decide ; you can only decide about this world's life. Surely we believe in our Lord that He may forgive us our sins and the enchantment to which you compelled us ; and Allah is better and more abiding".³¹

In Sura al-Shū'āra further detail of this event has been given when Pharaoh, at the first instance, is seen threatening Moses :

"Said he : If you will take a god beside me, I will most certainly make you one of the imprisoned. He said : What : even if I bring to you something manifest : Said he : Bring it then, if you are of the truthful ones. So he cast down his rod, and lo ! it was an obvious serpent. And he drew forth his hand, and lo ! it appeared white to the onlookers".³²

The same event is repeated afterwards.³³ The Holy Quran has referred to this event also in Sura al-Namal where it is indicated that when Moses saw it (staff) in motion as if it were a serpent, he turned back retreating and did not return. Then God said to Moses : "Fear not ; surely the prophets shall not fear in My presence".³⁴ It is also referred in Sura al-Qasas where a new point comes to notice that Pharaoh (to avoid his confusion) said : "O chiefs : I do not know of any god for you besides myself ; therefore, kindle a fire for me, O Haman, on dust, then prepare for me a lofty building so that I may obtain knowledge of Moses' God, and most surely I think him to be one of the liars".³⁵

PHARAOH'S PEOPLE AFFLICTED WITH VARIOUS CALAMITIES

The Holy Quran says :

"And certainly We overtook Pharaoh's people with droughts and diminution of fruits that they may be mindful. But when good befell them they said : This is due to us and when evil afflicted them, they attributed it to the ill luck of Moses and those with them, surely their evil fortune is from Allah, but most of them do not know. And they said : Whatever sign you may bring to us to charm us with it—we will not believe in you. Therefore, We sent upon them widespread flood and the locusts and the lice and the frogs and the blood clear signs ; but they behaved haughtily and they were a guilty people. And when the punishment fell upon them, they said : O Moses : pray

for us to your Lord as He has promised with you ; if you remove the punishment from us, we will certainly believe in you and we send away with you the children of Israel. But when We removed the punishment from them till a term which they should attain, lo ! they broke (the promise). Therefore, We inflicted retribution on them".³⁶

The Holy Quran has further referred to these signs only once in the Sura Bani Isra'īl, in the following words :

"And certainly We gave Moses nine clear signs ; so ask the children of Israel when he came to them, Pharaoh said to him : Most surely I deem you, O Moses, to be a man deprived of reason. He said : Truly you know that none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth has sent down these as clear proofs, and most surely I believe you, O Pharaoh, to be given over to perdition. So he desired to destroy them out of the earth, but We drowned him and those with him altogether".³⁷

GOD MANIFESTED HIS GLORY TO THE MOUNTAIN

The resplendent and the glorious event from the History of Moses—but in the history of all the Prophets—is the moment when the prophet is bestowed with "Divine Guidance". Moses was called, and granted the Torah. The Holy Quran mentions this event and reveals these interesting facts :

"And We appointed with Moses a time of thirty nights and completed them with ten (more), so the appointed time of Lord was complete forty nights, and Moses said to his brother Aaron : "Take my place among my people, and act well and do not follow the way of mischief-makers. And when Moses came at our appointed time and his Lord spoke to him, he said : My Lord : Show me (thyself), so that I may look upon thee. He said : You cannot (bear to) see Me, but look at the mountain, if it remains firm in its place, then will you see Me ; but when his Lord manifested His glory to the mountain He made it crumble and Moses fell down in swoon : then when he recovered, he said : Glory be to Thee, I turn to Thee, and I am the first of the believers. He said : O Moses surely I have chosen you above the people with My messages and with my words, therefore, take hold of what I give to you and be of the grateful ones".³⁸

THE FISH TAKES ITS WAY INTO THE RIVER WONDERFULLY

The Holy Quran does not give a detailed account of this event, but has only referred to the same while mentioning the travels of Moses in search of knowledge. The Holy Quran says :

“And when Moses said to his servant. I will not cease until I reach the junction of the two rivers or I will go on for years. So when they reached the junction of the two (rivers), they forgot their fish, and it took its way into the sea, going away. But when they had gone farther, he said to his servant : Bring to us our morning meal, certainly we have met with fatigue from this our journey. He said ; Did you see when we took refuge on the rock, then I forgot the fish, and nothing made me forget to speak of it but the devil, and it took its way into the river wonderfully. He said : This is what we sought for ; so they returned retracing their footsteps’³⁹

In the above mentioned event the loss of fish was, according to a report, to serve as a sign that the goal had been attained.⁴⁰

MANIFESTATION OF DIVINE WISDOM

Divine Laws as manifested in every-day life of man are really working towards the benefit and betterment of humanity and its ultimate good. An outward eye sometimes can not find wisdom in some destructive works of nature. The Prophet Moses travelled in search of such knowledge. The Holy Quran says :

“Then they found one from among Our servants whom We had granted mercy from Us and whom We had taught knowledge from ourselves. Moses said to him : Shall I follow you on condition that you should teach me right knowledge of what you have been taught ? He said : Surely you cannot have patience with me. And how can you have patience in that of which you have not got a comprehensive knowledge. He said : If Allah, please, you will find me patient and I shall not disobey you in any matter. He said : If you would follow me, then do not question me about anything until I myself speak to you about it. So they went (their way) until when they embarked in the boat he made a hole in it. (Moses) said : Have you made a hole in it to drown its inmates ? Certainly you have done a grievous thing. He said : Did I not say that you will not be able to have patience with me ? He said : Blame me not for what I forgot and do not constrain me to a difficult thing in my affair. So they went on until when they met a boy, he slew him (Moses) said : Have you slain an innocent person otherwise than for manslaughter ? Certainly you have done an evil thing. He said : Did I not say to you that you will not be able to have patience with me ? He said : If I ask you about anything after this, keep me not in your company ; indeed you shall have (then) found an excuse in my case. So they went on until when they came to the people of a town, they asked them for food, but they refused to entertain them as guests, then they found in it a wall which was on the point of

falling, so he put it in a right state. (Moses) said : if you had pleased, you might certainly have taken a recompense for it. He said : This shall be separation between me and you ; now I will inform you of the significance of that with which you could not have patience. As for the boat, it belonged to (some) poor men who worked on the river and I wished that I should damage it and there was behind them a king who siezed every boat by force. And as for the boy, his parents were believers and we feared lest he should make disobedience and ingratitude to come upon them. So we desired that their Lord might give them in his place one better than him in purity and nearer to having compassion. And as for the wall it belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and there was beneath in it a treasure belonging to them, and their father was a righteous man ; so your Lord desired that they should attain their maturity and take out their treasure a mercy from your Lord, and I did not do it of my own accord. This is the significance of that with which you could not have patienc."⁴¹

GOD'S PROMISE TO MOSES' MOTHER

Moses was born at a time when Pharaoh had commanded that all male children born to the Israelites be slaughtered.⁴² Moses' mother kept him concealed for some time, and at last, unable to hide him any longer threw him into the river in a chest. The Holy Quran reveals how Moses as a child was thrown into river, saved and brought back to his mother :

"And We revealed to Moses' mother, saying : Give him suck, then when you fear for him, cast him into the river and do not fear nor grieve : surely We will bring him back to you and make him one of the prophets. And Pharaoh's followers took him up that he might be an enemy and a grief for them ; surely Pharaoh and Haman and their hosts were wrong doers, And Pharaoh's wife said : A refreshment of the eye to me and to you : do not slay him : may be he will be useful to us, or we may take him for a son ; and they did not perceive And the heart of Moses's mother was free (from anxiety) she would have almost disclosed it had We not strengthened her heart so that she might be of the believers. And she said to his sister : Follow him up. So she watched him from a distance while they did not perceive. And We did not allow him to suck before, so she said : shall I point out to you the people of a house who will take care of him for you, and they will be benevolent to him ? So we gave him back to his mother that her eye might be refreshed, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know the promise of Allah is true but most of them do not know"⁴³

In Sura Tāhā some other parts of this event are given :

“And certainly We bestowed on you a favour at another time : When We revealed to your mother what was revealed. Saying : Put him into a chest, then cast it down into the river, then the river shall throw him on the shore ; there shall take him up one who is an enemy to Me and enemy to him ; and I cast down upon you love from Me, and that you might be brought up before My eyes. When your sister went and said : Shall I direct you to one who will take charge of him ? So We brought you back to your mother, that her eye might be cooled and she should not grieve”.⁴⁴

KORAH SWALLOWED UP BY THE EARTH

Korah, intoxicated with the wine of wealth forgot all moral, ethical and religious values. He revolted against Moses and Aaron in spite of being one of the people of Moses. The Holy Quran reveals how his pride and wealth and he himself came to an inglorious end :

“Surely Korah was of the people of Moses, but he rebelled against them, and We had given him of the treasures, so much so that his hoards of wealth would certainly weigh down a company of men possessed of great strength. When his people said to him : Do not exult, surely Allah does not love the exultant. And seek by means of what Allah has given you the future abode, and do not neglect your portion of this world, and do good to others as Allah has done good to you, and do not seek mischief in the land : Surely Allah does not love the mischief-makers. He said : I have been given this only on account of the knowledge I have. Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him of the generations those who were mightier in strength than he and greater in assemblage. And the guilty shall not be asked about their faults. So he went forth to his people in his finery. Those who desire this world's life said : O would that we had the like of what Korah is given ; most surely he is possessed of mighty good fortune. And those who were given the knowledge said : Woe to you : Allah's reward is better for him who believes and does good none is made to receive this except the patient. Thus We made the earth to swallow up him and his abodes ; so he had no body of helpers to assist him against Allah, nor was he of those who can defend themselves”.⁴⁵

HUNDRED YEARS OR PART OF A DAY

Can a man remain dead for hundred years and then suddenly stand up just as he arises from his bed normally ? It is impossible for the man who is bound up in the limits of time and space, to understand this, but quite possible and no wonder

for God, the Greater. The Holy Quran mentions such an event from Jewish history :

“Or the like of him who passed by a town and it had fallen down upon its roofs ; he said : When will Allah give it life after its death ? So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then roused him. He said : How long have you tarried ? He said : I have tarried a day, or a part of a day. Said He : Nay ; you have tarried a hundred years ; then look at your food and drink—years have not passed over it ; and look at your ass ; and that We may make you a sign to men, and look at the bones, how We set them together, then clothe them with flesh ; so when it became clear to him, he said : I know that Allah has power over all things”.⁴⁶

SIGN OF SPEAKING BY SIGNS OF ZACHARIAS

The Holy Quran reveals that whenever Zacharias, being the guardian of Mary, entered the sanctuary to see her, he found food with her. Zacharias was so impressed by piety and righteousness of Mary that a natural desire for a son awoke in his heart and then he prayed :

“There did Zacharias pray to his Lord ; he said : My Lord : grant me from the good offspring ; surely Thou art the Hearer of prayer. Then the angels called to him as he stood praying in the sanctuary : that Allah gives you the good news of John, varifying a word from Allah and honourable and chaste and a prophet from among the good ones. He said My Lord : how shall there be a son (born) to me, and old age has already come upon me, and my wife is barren ? He said : Even thus does Allah what He pleases. He said : My lord ; appoint a sign for me. Said He : Your sign is that you shall not speak to men for three days except by signs, and remember your Lord much and glorify Him in the evening and the morning”.⁴⁷

The Holy Quran has given a detail of the prayers which Zacharias called upon his Lord in a low voice : Sura Maryam opens with the mention of Zacharias as follows :

“Sufficient (art thou) as a Guide, O knowing, Truthful one. A mention of the mercy of your Lord to His servant Zacharias. When he called upon his Lord in a low voice, He said : My Lord ; surely my bones are weakened and my head flares with hoariness, and my Lord ; I have never been unsuccessful in my prayer to Thee. And surely I fear my cousins after me, and my wife is barren, therefore, grant me from Thyself an heir. Who should inherit me and

inherit from the children of Jacob, and make him, my Lord, one in whom Thou are well pleased. O Zacharias, surely We give you good news of a boy whose name shall be John : We have not made before anyone his equal. He said : O my Lord ; When shall I have a son and my wife is barren, and I myself have reached indeed the extreme degree of old age ? He said : So shall it be ; your Lord says : It is easy to me, and indeed I created you before, when you were nothing. He said : My Lord ; Give me a sign. He said ; your sign is that you shall not speak to the people three nights while in sound health. So he went forth to his people from his place of worship, then he made known to them that they should glorify (Allah) morning and evening".⁴⁸

The Holy Quran has also made a brief reference to this event in Sura "Al-Anbia".⁴⁹

MIRACLES OF ABRAHAM

Abraham is the "Father of the Faithful" to Jew, Christians, and Moslems. The story of his life is given (in the Bible) in the book of Genesis, xi-xxv, Born in the city of Ur, in southern Mesopotamia, he migrated with his family to Palestine or the land of Canaan, where they found plentiful pasture and water for their herds, pitched their tents, and made their home. From time to time Abraham was the recipient of promises from Jehovah that his seed should inherit the land where he was but a sojourner.⁵⁰

The Holy Quran mentions that the king disputed with Abraham about his Lord. But Abraham's argument was so strong that the king who disbelieved was confounded.⁵¹

The wonderful event, rather a blessing which is bestowed upon Abraham by his Lord, is to satisfy him about Lord's giving life to the dead. The Holy Quran says :

"And when Abraham said : My Lord ; show me how Thou givest life to the dead, He said : What ! and do you not believe ? He said : Yes, but that my heart may be at ease. He said : Then take four of the birds, then (train them to follow you) then place on every mountain a part of them, then call them, they will come to you flying and know that Allah is Mighty, Wise".⁵²

BIRTH OF A SON ANNOUNCED TO ABRAHAM

The Holy Quran mentions that messengers of Allah came to Abraham. He entertained them with a roasted calf. But when he saw that their hands were not

extended towards it he deemed them strange and conceived fear of them. The angels satisfied him and announced good news. The Holy Quran says :

“And his wife was standing (by) so she laughed, then We gave her the good news of Isaaq and after Isaaq of (a son’s son) Jacob. She said : O Wonder ! Shall I bear a son when I am an extremely old woman and this my husband an extremely old man ? Most surely this is a wonderful thing. They said : Do you wonder at Allah’s bidding? The mercy of Allah and His blessings are on you, O people of the house, surely He is Praised, Glorious”.⁵³

The Holy Quran has referred to this event also in Sura al-Zariyat when Abraham brought a fat (roasted) calf near them and asked them why they did not eat and conceived in his heart a fear on account of them, they said to him :

“They said : Fear not. And they gave him the good news of a boy possessing knowledge. Then his wife came up in great grief and she struck her face and said : An old barren woman ! They said : Thus says your Lord : Surely He is the Wise, the Knowing”.⁵⁴

DIVINE PROTECTION FOR ABRAHAM FROM FIRE

The Holy Quran claims that Allah bestows protection upon all his sincere servants. In Sura al-Anbiya God’s favour on Moses⁵⁵, Lot⁵⁶, Noah⁵⁷, David⁵⁸, Solomon⁵⁹, Job⁶⁰, Ishmael⁶¹, Idris⁶², Jonah⁶³, Zacharias⁶⁴, Mary⁶⁵ and his son is mentioned briefly. But the Holy Quran gives a detailed account of Allah’s mercy and protection for Abraham :

“And certainly We gave to Abraham his rectitude before, and We knew him fully well. When he said to his sire and his people : What are these images to whose worship you cleave ? They said : We found our fathers worshipping them. He said : Certainly you have been (both) you and your fathers, in manifest error. They said : have you brought to us the truth, or are you one of the triflers ? He said : Nay ; your Lord is the Lord of the Heavens and the earth, who brought them into existence, and I am of those who bear witness to this : And by Allah I will certainly strive against your idols after you go away, turning back. So he broke them into pieces, except the chief of them, that haply they may return to it. They said : Who has done this to our gods? Most surely he is one of the unjust. They said : We heard a youth called Abraham speak of them. Said they : Then bring him before the eyes of the people, perhaps they may bear witness. They said ; Have you done this to our gods ; O Abraham ? He said : Surely (some doer) has done it ; the chief of them is this, therefore, ask them, if they can speak. Then they turned to themselves and said : Surely you yourselves are the

unjust : Then they were made to hang down their heads. Certainly you know that they do not speak. He said : What ! do you then serve besides Allah what brings you not any benefit at all, nor does it harm you ? Fie on you and on what you serve besides Allah : what ! do you not then understand ? They said : Burn him and help your gods, if you are doing to do (anything). We said : O fire ! be a comfort and peace to Abraham. And they desired a trap on him, but we made them the greatest losers".⁶⁶

The Holy Quran declares that trials purify because when the sincere ones try their best their striving brings rewards and their persecution separates them from hypocrites. The Holy Quran mentions Noah and the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and other prophets as an example, and also refers to Abraham :

"So naught was the answer of his people except that they said : Slay him or burn him ; then Allah delivered him from the fire, most surely there are signs in this for a people who believe".⁶⁷

The Holy Quran refers to this event :

"They said : Build for him a building, then cast him into the burning fire. And they desired a trap against him, but We brought them low".⁶⁸

A GREAT SACRIFICE

Trials are very essential to determine the sincerity of a man. Abraham was not an exception. The Holy Quran declares him successful in his trial :

"And when he attained to working with him, he said O my son ! surely I have seen a dream that I should sacrifice you, consider then what you see. He said : O my father ; do what you are commanded : If Allah please, you will find me of the patient ones. So when they both submitted and he threw him down upon his forehead. And We called out to him saying : O Abraham ! You have indeed shown the truth of the vision ; surely thus do We reward the doers of good. Most surely this is a manifest trial. And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice. And We perpetuated to him among the later generations".⁶⁹

ARK OF NOAH

"Noah, Hebrew patriarch, whose story is told (in the Bible) in Genesis vi. He was the exception to the general run of human wickedness, and when the Lord had decided to send a great flood to destroy all mankind, he received the Divine command to make an ark, and to place in it his wife, three sons, and their wives, and a male and a female of every living thing. The story of Noah given in Genesis has close affinities with that of Utanpishtim, the Baby-lonian Noah, whose story is

one of the principal literary relics of ancient Babylonia".⁷⁰

The Holy Quran tells the history of Noah that he communicates the Divine message to his people but they reject him, and deterrent punishment comes in the shape of a great flood and non-believers are drowned. The Holy Quran cites :

"Certainly We sent Noah to his people, so he said : O my people ! serve Allah, you have no god other than Him ! surely I fear for you the chastisement of a grievous day. The chiefs of his people said : Most surely we see you in clear error. He said : O my people ; there is no error in me, but I am an prophet from the Lord of the world. I deliver to you the messages of my Lord, and I offer you good advice, and I know from Allah what you do not know ; what ! do you wonder that a reminder has come to you from your Lord through a man from among you, that he might warn you and that you might guard (against evil), and so that mercy may be shown to you. But they called him a liar, so We delivered him and those with him in the ark, and We drowned those who rejected our communications ; surely they were a blind people".⁷¹

A reference to the history of Noah has been made in Sura Yunus :

"But they rejected him, so We delivered him and those with him in the ark and We made them ruler and drowned those who rejected Our communications ; see then what was the end of the (people) warned".⁷²

In the above-mentioned verses only mention of the end of the opponents of Noah was made but in Sura Hud some other links of this event are mentioned :

"And it was revealed to Noah ; That none of your people will believe except those who have already believed, therefore, do not grieve at what they do : And make the ark before Our eyes and (according to) Our revelation, and do not speak to Me in respect of those who are unjust ; Surely they shall be drowned And he began to make the ark ; and whenever the chiefs from among his people passed by him they laughed at him. He said : If you laugh at us, surely we too laugh at you as you laugh (at us). So shall you know who it is on whom will come a chastisement which will disgrace him, and on whom will lasting chastisement come down. Until when Our command came and water came forth from the valley, We said : Carry in it two of all things a pair, and your own family-except those against whom the word has already gone forth, and those who believe. And there believed not with him but a few. And he said : Embark in it, in the name of Allah be its sailing and its anchoring ; most surely my Lord is Forgiving, Merciful. And it moved on with them amid waves like mountains ; and Noah called out to his son, and he was

aloof. O my son ! embark with us and be not with the unbelievers. He said ; I will betake myself for refuge to a mountain that shall protect me from the water. He said : There is no protector today from Allah's punishment but He who has mercy and a wave intervened between them, so he was of the drowned. And it was said : O earth ; swallow down your water, and O cloud, clear away ; and the water was made to abate and the affair was decided and the ark rested on the Judi, and it was said : Away with the unjust people. And Noah cried out to his Lord and said : My Lord : surely my son is of my family, and Thy promise is surely true, and Thou art the justest of all the judges. He said : O Noah ; surely he is not of your family, surely he is (the doer of) other than good deeds, therefore, ask not of Me that of which you have no knowledge ; surely I admonish you lest you may be of the ignorant. He said : My Lord : I seek refuge in Thee from asking Thee that of which I have no knowledge and if Thou shouldst not forgive me and have mercy on me, I should be one of the losers. It was said : O Noah ; descend with peace from Us and blessings on you and on the nations from among those who are with you, and there shall be nations whom We will afford provisions, then a painful punishment from Us shall afflict them. These are announcements relating to the unseen which We reveal to you, you did not know them (neither) you nor your people—before this ; therefore, be patient ; surely the end is for those who guard (against evil)".⁷³

The Holy Quran mentions the Divine favour on the prophets, and their deliverance from their enemies. It refers to Noah :

"And Noah, when he cried aforetime, so We answered him. and delivered him and his followers from the great calamity. And We helped him against the people who rejected Our communications ; surely they were an evil people, so We drowned them all".⁷⁴

A reference to the history of Noah and his deliverance is also mentioned in Sura al-Mu'minun⁷⁵, and Chapter al-Qamar.⁷⁶ A detailed account of Noah's preaching, the rejection of the opponents and Noah's prayers for the chastisement of the enemies has been reported in Sura Nuh".⁷⁷

THE PROPHET HUD

The Prophet who, according to the Quran, appeared among the 'Ad, Sura Hud even bears his name, where the verses 50-60 deal with him. He is represented as one of the kinsmen (akh) of 'Ad and his geneology (which is transmitted in various forms) therefore concides in part with that of their founder 'Ad. He is also identified with 'Abir (the Biblical 'Eber, the ancestor of the Hebrews) ; in another

reference he is called the son of Abir). In the eyes of the orientalist his figure is shadowy and they have tried to suggest that the story of Hud was fabricated :

“In the article ‘Ad attention has already been called to the fact that the existence of a tribe of ‘Ad is problematic. This is still truer of Hud. The word Hud in the Quran is a name for the Jews as a body (Sura ii, 11, 135, 140), and the root h-w-d to profess Judaism (ii. 62, iv. 46 etc). The proper name looks as if it had been derived from the verb and the noun ; the traditional identification of Hud with the ancestor of the Hebrews probably points in the same direction. Hirschfeld is perhaps correct when he calls Hud an allegorical figure (Beitrage Zur Brklarung des Koran, leipzig, 1886, P. 17. note 4). Von Kremer’s suggestion (Uber die silidarabische sage P. 21) sq), that the orator of Barahut was the immediate cause of the rise of the Hud legend is worthy of note.”⁷⁸

These socalled researches of the Orientalists who only try to prove that Islam is an offshoot of Judaism, are quite baseless. The Holy Quran explicitly reports the history of Hud, his character, his preaching, his rejection by the opponents and Divine help in the shape of punishment for the enemies :

“And to ‘Ad (We sent) their brother Hud. He, said : O my people; serve Allah, you have no god other than Him ; will you not then guard (against evil) ? The chiefs of those who disbelieved from among his people said : Most surely we see you in folly, and most surely we think you to be of the liars. He said : O my people ; there is no folly in me, but I am an prophet of the Lord of the worlds. I deliver to you the messages of my Lord and I am a faithful adviser to you. What ; do you wonder that a reminder has come to you from your Lord through a man from among you that he might warn you ? And remember when He made you successors after Noah’s people and increased you in excellence in respect of make ; therefore, remember the benefits of Allah, that you may be successful. They said : Have you come to us that we may serve Allah alone and give up what our fathers used to serve? Then bring to us what you threaten us with, if you are of the truthful ones. He said : Indeed uncleanness and wrath from your Lord have lighted upon you; what ; do you dispute with me about names which you and your father have given ? Allah has not sent any authority for them ; wait then, I too with you will be of those who wait. So We delivered him and those with him by mercy from Us, and We cut off the last of those who rejected Our communications and were not believers”⁷⁹

In the Sura, which bears the name "Hud", an account of Hud's preaching along with the end of his enemies, has been mentioned :

"And to 'Ad (We sent) their brother Hud. He said : O my people ; serve Allah, you have no god other than He ; you are nothing but forgers. O my people I do not ask of you any reward for it : my reward is only with him who created me ; do you not then understand ? And O my people ; ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him, He will send on you clouds pouring down abundance of rain and add strength to your strength, and do not turn back guilty. They said : O Hud ; you have not brought to us any clear argument and we are not going to desert our gods for your word, and we are not believers in you. We cannot say aught but that some of our gods have smitten you with evil. He said : Surely I call Allah to witness, and do you bear witness too, that I am clear of what you associate (with Allah). Besides Him, therefore, scheme against me all together ; then give me no respite. Surely I rely on Allah, my Lord, and your Lord : There is no living creature but He has it in His control, surely my Lord is on the right path. But if you turn back, then indeed I have delivered to you the message with which I have been sent to you, and my Lord will bring another people in your place, and you cannot do Him any harm : surely my Lord is the Preserver of all things. And when Our decree came to pass, We delivered Hud and those who believed with him with mercy from Us, and We delivered them from a hard chastisement. And this was 'Ad, they denied the communications of their Lord, and disobeyed His prophets and followed the bidding of every insolent opposer (of truth). And they were overtaken by curse in this world and on the resurrection day ; now surely 'Ad disbelieved in their Lord ; now surely, away with 'Ad the people of Hud".⁸⁰

The Holy Quran describes the position adopted by the people in the shape of disbelief in the Creator. They did not take any notice of warning announced by the prophets but instead they felt proud of their strength. So their admonitory end is cited :

"Then as to 'Ad, they were unjustly proud in the land, and they said : Who is mightier in strength than we ? Did they not see that Allah who created them was mightier than they in strength, and they denied Our communications. So We sent on them a furious wind in unlucky days, that We may make them taste the chastisement of abasement in this world's life ; and certainly the chastisement of the here-after is much more abasing, and they shall not be helped".⁸¹

A detailed account of Hud's preaching, his rejection by the opposers, his warning and lastly the destruction of the disbelievers has also been reported in

Chapter XXVI.⁸² In Chapter XLVI the name of the place is mentioned where Hud preached. (The chapter bears the same name (الاحقاف) or sand hills where the destruction of 'Ad occurred. Some further detail of their chastisement is cited here :

“And mention the brother of 'Ad, when he warned his people in the sandy plains (Ahqaf), and indeed warners came before him and after him saying : serve none but Allah : Surely I fear for you the chastisement of a grievous day. They said : Have you come to us to turn us away from our gods ; then bring us what you threaten us with, if you are of the truthful ones. He said : The knowledge is only with Allah, and I deliver to you the message with which I am sent, but I see you are a people who are ignorant. So when they saw it as a cloud appearing in the sky advancing towards their valleys, they said : This is a cloud which will give us rain. Nay ! it is what you sought to hasten on, a blast of wind in which is a painful chastisement. Destroying everything by the command of its Lord, so they became such that naught could be seen except their dwellings. Thus do We reward the guilty people”⁸³.

The Holy Quran has referred to the history of Hud on certain occasion as an example, warning and admonition for the people⁸⁴.

SHE-CAMEL OF SALIH

Salih, a prophet who was sent to the Arab people Samood. Like other prophets he tried his best to preach and bring his countrymen to pray to Allah alone. Salih was adored and respected by his people but on his preaching they were at a loss to accept the truth of this respected person at the cost of the rejection of the gods of their forefathers (11 : 62). But at last they rejected him. The orientalist admit the facts but they have misrepresented them in Ency. of Islam :

“The story has a certain amount of foundation in fact as much as the Thamud according to VII : 74 the successors of the Ad, were an ancient Arab tribe known also from other sources (see the art. Thamud). The dwellings which the Thamud had hewn out of the rocks (LXXXIX. 9, vii. 74, xxiv. 149) often mentioned in the texts, the remains of which were still visible (xxix, 38) are undoubtedly the tombs, containing remains of human bones, hewn in the rocks of al-Ola, which led Phillippe Berger to the further supposition that the word Kafra (tomb) found in the inscriptions there may have been explained as Kufr (unbelief). *But whence Muhammad got the name Salih and the story of the camel cannot be ascertained. It is further remarkable that the stories of Salih and Hud (q. v) are in contradiction to the usual teaching of Muhammad in the Meccan period to the effect that no prophet had been sent to the Arabs before him*”⁸⁵

The Holy Quran reveals this history and describes the preaching of Salih, rejection by his people and their exceeding the limits and lastly the curse and punishment which overtook them explicitly as follows :

“And to Samood (We sent) their brother Salih. He said : O my people ; serve Allah, you have no god other than Him ; clear proof indeed has come to you from your Lord ; this is Allah’s she-camel for you—a sign, therefore, leave her alone to pasture on Allah’s earth, and do not do her any harm, otherwise painful chastisement will overtake you. And remember when He made you successors after ‘Ad and settled you in the land—you make mansions on its plains and hew out houses in the mountains remember therefore, Allah’s benefit and do not act corruptly in the land making mischief.⁸⁶ The chiefs of those who behaved proudly among his people said to those who were considered weak, to those who believed from among them. Do you know that Salih is sent by his Lord ? They said : Surely we are believers in what he has been sent with. Those who were haughty said : Surely we are deniers of what you believe in. So they slew the she-camel and revolted against their Lord’s commandments, and they said : O Salih bring us what you threatened us with, if you are one of the prophets. The earth-quake overtook them, so they became motionless bodies in their abode. Then he turned away from them and said : O my people ; I did certainly deliver to you the message of my Lord, and I gave you good advice, but you do not love those who give good advice”.⁸⁷

In Sura Hud the same event is reported. However, some new links are mentioned :

“And to Samood (We sent) their brother Salih. He said : O my people ; serve Allah, you have no god other than He ; He brought you into being from the earth, and made you dwell in it, therefore ask forgiveness of Him, then turn to Him ; surely my Lord is Nigh, Answering. They said : O Salih : Surely you were amongst us in whom great expectations were placed before this ; do you (now) forbid us from worshipping what our fathers worshipped ? And as to that which you call us to, most surely we are in disquieting doubt. He said : O my people ; tell me if I have clear proof from my Lord and He has granted to me mercy from Himself—who will then help me against Allah if I disobey Him ? Therefore you do not add to me other than loss. And O my people ; this will be Allah’s she-camel for you, a sign, therefore, leave her to pasture on Allah’s earth and do not touch her with evil, for then a near chastisement will overtake you. But they slew her, so he said : Enjoy yourselves in your abode for three days, that is a promise not to be belied.⁸⁸ So

when Our decree came to pass, We delivered Salih and those who believed with him by mercy from Us, and (We saved them) from the disgrace of that day ; surely your Lord is the Strong, the Mighty. And the rumbling⁸⁹, overtook those who were unjust, so they became motionless bodies in their abodes. As though they had never dwelt in them ; now surely did Samood disbelieve in their Lord ; now surely, away with Samood.⁹⁰

This event with some further detail has been reported also in Chapter XXVI as follows :

“Samood gave the lie to the prophets. When their brother Salih said to them : Will you guard (against evil) ? Surely I am a faithful prophet to you. Therefore guard against (the punishment) of Allah and obey me. And I do not ask you any reward of it my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds. Will you be left secure in what is here ? In gardens and fountains. And corn-fields and palm-trees having fine spadices. And you hew houses out of the mountains exultingly ? Therefore guard against (the punishment of) Allah and obey me. And do not obey the the bidding of the extravagant. Who make mischief in the land and do not act aright. They said : you are only of the deluded ones. You are naught but a mortal like ourselves : so bring a sign if you are one of the truthful. He said : This is a she-camel; she shall have her portion of water, and you have your portion of water on an appointed time.⁹¹ And do not touch her with evil, lest the chastisement of a gievous day should overtake you. But they stabbed her, then became regretting ones. So the chastisement overtook them. Most surely there is a sign in this, but most of them do not believe. And most surely your Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful.⁹²

The same event with some further important details has been mentioned also in Chapter LIV as follows :

“Samood rejected the warning. So they said : What, a single mortal from among us ; shall we follow him ? Most surely we shall in that case be in sure error and distress. Has the reminder been made to light upon him from among us ? Nay ; he is an insolent liar. Tomorrow shall they know who is the liar, the insolent one. Surely We are going to send the she-camel as a trial for them ; therefore, watch them and have patience. And inform them that the water is shared between them ; every share of the water shall be attended. But they called their companion, so he took (the sword) and slew (her). How (great) was then My chastisement and My warning : Surely We sent upon them a single cry, so they were like the dry fragments of trees which the maker of an enclosure collects. And

certainly We have made the Quran easy for remembrance, but is there any one who will mind"⁹³.

The Holy Quran has referred to this event in the following verses briefly and named these people as the dwellers of the Rock : (the Chapter is also bearing this very name i.e. Rock).

"And the dwellers of the Rock certainly rejected the messengers. And We gave them Our communications but they turned aside from them ; And they hewed houses in the mountains in security. So the rumbling overtook them in the morning. And what they earned did not avail them"⁹⁴.

A brief reference to this great sign has been cited in Chapter XVII as follows :

"And nothing could have hindered Us that We should send signs except that the ancients rejected them; and We gave to Samood the she-camel a manifest sign—but on her account they did injustice, and We do not send signs but to make men fear"⁹⁵.

The Holy Quran mentions this event as a warning to the evildoers of Macca with some different details indicating their plot against the prophet Salih :

"And certainly We sent to Samood their brother Salih, saying : Serve Allah ; and lo ! they became two parties contending with each other. He said O my people : Why do you seek to hasten on the evil before the good ? Why do you not ask forgiveness of Allah so that you may be dealt with mercifully ? They said : We have met with ill luck on account of you and on account of those with you. He said : The cause of your evil fortune is with Allah, nay, you are a people who are tried. And there were in the city nine person who made mischief in the land and did not act aright. They said : Swear to each other by Allah that we will certainly make a sudden attack on him and his family by night, then we will say to his heir : We did not witness the destruction of his family, and we are most surely truthful.⁹⁶ And they planned a plan. and We planned a plan while they perceived not. See, then, how was the end of their plan that We destroyed them and their people, all (of them). So those are their houses fallen down because they were unjust, most surely there is a sign in this for a people who know. And We delivered those who believed and who guarded (against evil)"⁹⁷.

The Holy Quran while declaring the futility of false beliefs and the destruction of early nations refers to this event in various chapters :

“And (We destroyed) ‘Ad and Samood and from their dwellings (this) is apparent to you indeed ; and the devil made their deeds fairseeming to them, so he kept them back from the path, though they were endowed with perceptive faculties of the mind”.⁹⁸ “And in Samood : When it was said to them : Enjoy yourselves for a while. But they revolted against the commandment of their Lord, so the rumbling overtook them while they saw. So they were not able to rise up, nor could they defend themselves”.⁹⁹ “And that He did destroy the ‘Ad of old. And Samood So He spared not”.¹⁰⁰ “Samood And Ād called the striking calamity a lie. Then as to Somood, they were destroyed, by an excessively severe punishment”.¹⁰¹ “Samood gave the lie (to the truth) in their inordinary. When the most unfortunate of them broke forth with mischief. So Allah’s prophet said to them (leave alone) Allah’s she-camel and (give) her (to) drink. But they called him a liar and slaughtered her, therefore, their Lord crushed them for their sin and levelled them (with the ground). And He fears not its consequenc”.¹⁰²

The Holy Quran has further pointed out this event in the following verses briefly :

“Has not there come to you the story of the hosts? Of Pharaoh and Samood”.¹⁰³

“And (how your Lord dealt with) Samood, who hewed out the rocks in the valley”.¹⁰⁴

“Has not the news of those before them come to them ; of the people of Noah and Ād and Samood”.¹⁰⁵

THE PROPHET LOT

“Lot, the Lot of the Bible attains in Islam, even as early as the Kuran, an importance which he does not have in the Bible and Haggada or even in the Church”.¹⁰⁶

The Holy Quran refers to the history of Lot :

“And (We sent) Lot when he said to his people : What : do you commit an indecency which any one in the world has not done before you? Most surely you come to males in lust besides females : nay, you are an extravagant people. And the answer of his people was not other than that they said : Turn them out of your town, surely they are a people who seek to purify (themselves). So We delivered him and his followers, except his wife ;

she was of those who remained behind. And We rained upon them a rain, consider then what was the end of quality".¹⁰⁷

The Holy Quran has mentioned the history of Lot connected with the history of Abraham and told us how Lot, scoffed at, argued with his people, and as a result of that the end of his people :

"And when Our messengers came to Lot, he was grieved for them, and he lacked strength to protect them, and said : This is a hard day. And his people came to him, (as if) rushed on towards him, and already they did evil deeds. He said : O my people : these are my daughters—They are purer—for you, so guard against (the punishment of) Allah and do not disgrace me with regard to my guests ; is there not among you one right minded man ? They said : Certainly you know that we have no claim on your daughters, and most surely you know what we desire. He said Ah ! that I had power to repel you, rather I shall have recourse to a strong support. They said : O Lot : we are the messengers of your Lord ; they shall by no means reach you ; so remove your followers in a part of the night—and let none of you turn back—except your wife, for surely whatsoever befalls them shall befall her ; surely their appointed time is the morning ; is not the morning nigh ? So when Our decree came to pass, We turned them up side down and rained down upon them stones, of what had been decreed, one after another. Marked (for punishment) with your Lord ; and it is not far off from the unjust".¹⁰⁸

The Holy Quran reveals the history of Lot indicating that the transgressor will perish :

"So when the messengers came to Lot's followers : He said : Surely you are an unknown people. They said : Nay, we have come to you with that about which they disputed. And we have come to you with the truth, and we are most surely truthful. Therefore, go forth with your followers in a part of the night and yourself follow their rear, and let not any one of you turn round, and go forth whither you are commanded.¹⁰⁹ And We revealed to him this decree that the roots of these shall but cut off in the morning. And the people of the town came rejoicing. He said: Surely these are my guests, therefore, do not disgrace me. And guard against (the punishment of) Allah and do not put me to shame. They said . Have we not forbidden you from (other) people ? He said : These are my daughters, if you will do (aught). By your life : they were blindly wandering on in their frenzy (intoxication). So the rumbling overtook them (while) entering upon the time of sunrise. Thus did We turn

it upside down, and rained down upon them stones of what had been decreed. Surely in this are signs for those who examine. And surely it is on a road that still abides. Most surely there is a sign in this for the believers".¹¹⁰

The Holy Quran points out in the following verses that it was not just on account of the guests that the Divine punishment overtook them, but Lot constantly preached and protested against their indecency and at last prayed to God for help :

"The people of Lot gave the lie to the apostles. When their brother Lot said to them : Will you not guard (against evil) ? Surely I am faithful prophet to you. Therefore, guard against (the punishment of) Allah and obey me. And I do not ask you any reward for it ; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds ; What : do you come to the males from among the creatures. And leave what your Lord has created for you of your wives ? Nay, you are a people exceeding limits. They said : if you desist not, O Lot : You shall surely be of those who are expelled. He said : Surely I am of those who utterly abhor your doing. My Lord ! deliver me and my followers from what they do. So We delivered him and his followers all. Except an old woman, among those who remained behind. Then We utterly destroyed the others. And We rained down upon them, a rain and evil was the rain on those warned. Most surely there is a sign in this, but most of them do not believe. And most surely Your Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful".¹¹¹

The Holy Quran tells that Lot was a gifted person :

"And (as for) Lot, We gave him wisdom and knowledge, and We delivered him from the town which wrought abominations ; surely they were an evil people, transgressors".¹¹²

The reference to the history of Lot has been cited on various occasions in the Holy Quran.¹¹³

THE PROPHET SHUAIB

Shuaib, a prophet, mentioned in the Quran, was sent to the "people of the thicket" (al-Aika). According to the later Meccan suras, they were the inhabitants of Madyan. Like other prophets, Salih and Lut, he was respected by his people and the people called him forbearing and the right-directing one.¹¹⁴ The orientalist's remarks, in connection with his story mentioned in the Holy Quran are noteworthy : "It is evident that Muhammad had no very clear conception of Shuaib and it is not worth while enquiring whence he got the name, which does not occur elsewhere.

What Muhammad tells of him follows the stereotyped scheme in his stories of the prophet and reflects his own experience and struggles".¹¹⁵

The Holy Quran has mentioned generally the history of Shuaib along with the history of Lot. In the following verses Shuaib's preaching, his rejection by his people and their destruction is reported :

"And to Madyan (We sent) their brother Shuaib. He said : O my people : Serve Allah, you have no god other than Him ; clear proof indeed has come to you from your Lord, therefore, give full measure and weight and do not diminish to men their things, and do not make mischief in the land after its reform ; this is better for you if you are believers. And do not lie in wait in every path, threatening and turning away from Allah's path him who believes in Him and seeking to make it crooked and remember when you were few, then He multiplied you, and consider what was the end of the mischief-makers. And if there is a party of you who believe in that with which I am sent, and another party who do not believe, then wait patiently until Allah judges between us ; and He is the best of the judges. The chiefs, those who were proud from among his people. said : We will most certainly turn you out, O Shuaib, and (also) those who believe with you, from our town, or you shall come back to our faith. He said : What : though we dislike (it) ? Indeed we shall have forged a lie against Allah if we go back to your religion after Allah has delivered us from it, and it befits us not that we should go back to it, except if Allah our Lord please : Our Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge ; in Allah do we trust : Our Lord : decide between us and our people with truth and Thou art the best of deciders. And the chiefs of those who disbelieved from among his people said : If you follow Shuaib, you shall then most surely be losers. Then the earthquake overtook them, so they became motionless bodies in their abode. Those who called Shuaib a liar were as though they had never dwelt therein : those who called Shuaib a liar they were the losers. So he turned away from them and said : O my people : certainly I delivered to you the messages of my Lord and I gave you good advice : how shall I then be sorry for an unbelieving people".¹¹⁶

The history of Shuaib has been mentioned with further details in Sura Hud as follows :

"And to Madyan (We sent) their brother Shuaib. He said : O my people : serve Allah, you have no god other than He, and do not give short measures

and weight ; surely I see you in prosperity and surely I fear for you the chastisement of an all-encompassing day. And O my people ! give full measures and weight fairly, and defraud not men of their things, and do not act corruptly in the land, making mischief. What remains with Allah is better for you if you are believers, and I am not a keeper over you. They said ; O Shuaib : does your prayer enjoin you that we should forsake what our fathers worshipped or that we should not do what we please with regard to our property ? Farsooth you are the forbearing, the right directing one.¹¹⁷ He said: O my people: have you considered if I have a clear proof from my Lord and he has given me a goodly sustenance from Himself ; and I do not desire that in opposition to you I should betake myself to that which I forbid you : I desire nothing but reform so far as I am able, and with none but Allah is the direction of my affair to a right issue on Him do I rely and to Him do I turn. And, O my people : let not opposition to me make you guilty so that there may befall you the like of what befell the people of Noah, or the people of Hud, or the people of Salih, nor are the people of Lot far off from you.¹¹⁸ And ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him ; surely my Lord is Merciful, Loving-kind. They said : O Shuaib : we do not understand much of what you say and most surely we see you to be weak among us, and were it not for your family we would surely stone you, and you are not mighty against us.¹¹⁹ He said : O my people : is my family more esteemed by you than Allah ? and you neglect Him as a thing cast behind your back ; surely my Lord encompasses what you do. And O my people : act according to your ability, I too am acting : you will come to know soon who it is on whom will light the punishment that will disgrace him and who it is that is liar ; and watch, surely I too am watching with you. And when Our decree came to pass We delivered Shuaib and those who believed with him by mercy from Us, and the rumbling overtook those who were unjust so they became motionless bodies in their abodes. As though they had never dwelt in them : now surely perdition overtook Madyan as had perished Samood".¹²⁰

The Holy Quran has named the people of Shuaib as "the dwellers of the thicket".

"And the dwellers of the thicket also were most surely unjust. So We inflicted retribution on them".¹²¹

The event is further reported with new details. The hostility of unbelievers, in answer to his preaching, is described :

"The dwellers of the thicket gave the lie to the prophets. When Shuaib said

to them : Will you not guard (against evil) ? Surely I am a faithful prophet to you. Therefore, guard against (the punishment of) Allah and obey me. And I do not ask you any reward for it ; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds ; Give a full measure and be not of those who diminish. And weigh (things) with a right balance And do not wrong men of their things, and do not act corruptly in the earth, making mischief. And guard against (the punishment of) Allah who created you and the former nations. They said : You are only of those deluded. And you are naught but a mortal like ourselves and we conceive you to be certainly of the liars. Therefore, cause a portion of the heaven to come down upon us, if you are one of the truthful.¹²² He said : My Lord knows best what you do. But they called him a liar, so the chastisement of the day of covering overtook them ; surely it was the chastisement of a grievous day. Most surely there is a sign in this, but most of them do not believe. And most surely your Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful".¹²³

The reference to this event has been cited in the Holy Quran on different occasions.¹²⁴

THE PROPHET DAVID

The Holy Quran mentioning Saul, departing with his forces against Goliath mentions David that David slew Goliath.¹²⁵ Afterwards he was made a king. Mr. E.R. Pike says : "When on Saul's death in battle with the Philistines he became king, he made Jerusalem his capital and prepared a site for the Temple to be erected by his son Solomon. He is one of the most colourful characters in the Old Testament, and notwithstanding some dark blots on his character, is called "the man after God's own heart". A number of Psalms are attributed to him, but few scholars maintain that he composed all, if any, of these. He was said to be the ancestor of Joseph, husband of the Virgin Mary".¹²⁶

In Ency. of Islam, it is said : "Muhammad knew that David slew Goliath and that he received the Psalms from God. The Psalms (Zubur) is one of the four Scriptures with which Muhammad was acquainted".¹²⁷

The Holy Quran mentions that David was granted knowledge and power and in addition, Divine favour :

"And We made the mountains, declaring glory (to Us), and the birds subservient to David, and We were the doers. And We taught him the making of coats of mail for you that they may protect you in your wars ; will you then be grateful".¹²⁸

Divine favour on David is also referred to in Chapter XXXIV as the following :

“And certainly We gave to David excellence from Us. O mountains : repeat praises with him, and the birds, and We made the iron pliant to him, Saying : Make ample (coats of mail), and assign a time to the making of coats of mail and do good : surely I am seeing what you do”.¹²⁹

The Holy Quran has revealed the history of David somewhat in detail in Chapter XXXVIII as follows :

“And remember Our servant David, the possessor of power ; surely he was frequent in returning (to Allah) surely We made the mountain subject to him, to declare the glory (of Allah) at the evening and the sunrise. And the birds gathered together all were obedient to him. And We strengthened his kingdom and We gave him wisdom and a clear judgement. And has there come to you the story of the adversaries, when they made an entry into the private chamber by ascending over the walls ? When they entered in upon David and he was frightened at them, they said : Fear not two litigants, of whom one has acted wrongfully towards the other therefore, decide between us with justice, and do not act unjustly, and guide us to the right way : Surely this is my brother , he has ninety-nine ewes and I have a single ewe : but he said, make it over to me, and he has prevailed against me in discourse. He said : Surely he has been unjust to you in demanding your ewe (to add) to his own ewes ; and most surely most of the partners act wrongfully towards one another, save those who believe and do good and very few are they ; and David was sure that We had tried him, so he sought the protection of his Lord, and he fell down bowing and turned time after time (to Him). Therefore, We rectified for him this, and most surely he had a nearness to Us and an excellent resort. O David : surely We have made you a ruler in the land ; so judge between men with justice and do not follow desire, lest it should leap you astray from the path of Allah (as for) those who go astray from the path of Allah they shall surely have a severe chastisement because they forgot the day of reckoning”.¹³⁰

THE PROPHET SOLOMON

The Prophet Solomon, King of the Hebrew Kingdom in Palestine (c. 970-C. 945 BC)¹³¹ was the son of David. He was bestowed with wealth, perspicacity, discernment, wisdom and justice along with his prophethood. He was the most resplendent figure among the world rulers :

“Sulaiman B. Dawud, the biblical King Solomon, is an outstanding personality in Muhammadan legends. There were, as the Arab histories recount, four great world rulers, two of whom were infidels, Nimrod and Nebuchadnezzar ; and two of

whom were believers, Alexander the Great and Solomon. Of these the last was the most resplendent figure".¹³² The Holy Quran reveals that Solomon along with his father was blessed with knowledge and power :

"And David and Solomon when they gave judgement concerning the field when the peoples' sheep pastured therein by night, and We were bearers of witness to their judgement. So We made Solomon to understand it : and to each one We gave wisdom and knowledge. And (We made subservient) to Solomon the wind blowing violent, pursuing its course by His command to the Land which We had blessed, and We are knower of all things. And of the devils there were those who dived for him and did other work besides that : and We kept guard over them".¹³³

The Holy Quran gives a detailed account of the vastness of Solomon's kingdom and the power bestowed on him by his Lord :

"And Solomon was David's heir, and he said : O men ; we have been taught the voices of birds, and we have been granted abundance most surely this is manifest grace. And his hosts of the jinn and the men and the birds were gathered to him and they were formed into groups. Until when they came to the valley of the ants, an ant said : O ants ! enter your houses that Solomon and his hosts may not crush you while they do not know. So he smiled, wondering at her word, and said : My Lord grant me that I should be grateful for Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I should do good such as Thou art pleased with, and make me enter, by Thy mercy, into Thy servants, the good ones. And he reviewed the birds, then said : How is it I see not Hudhud, or is it that he is of the absentees.¹³⁴ I will most certainly chastise him with a severe chastisement, or kill him, or he shall bring to me a clear plea. And he tarried not long, then said : I comprehend that which you do not comprehend and I have brought to you a sure information from Sheba. Surely I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given abundance and she has mighty throne. I found her people adoring the sun instead of Allah and the devil has made their deeds fair-seeming to them and thus turned them from the way, so they do not go aright. That they do not make obeisance to Allah, Who brings forth what is hidden in the heavens and the earth and knows what you hide and what you make manifest. Allah, there is no god but He. He is the Lord of mighty power. He said : We will see whether you have told truth or whether you are of the liars. Take this my letter and hand it over to them, then turn away from them and see what (answer) they return. She said : O Chiefs : surely an honourable letter has

been delivered to me. Surely it is from Solomon, and surely it is in the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. That exalt not yourselves against me and come to me in submission. She said : O Chiefs : give me advice respecting my affair. I never decide an affair until you are in my presence. They said : We are possessors of strength and possessors of mighty powers, and the command is yours, therefore see what you will command. She said : Surely the kings, when they enter a town ruin it and make the noblest of its people to be low, and thus they (always) do. And surely I am going to send a present to them, and shall wait to see what (answer) do the messengers bring back. So when he came to Solomon, he said : What : will you help me with wealth ? But what Allah has given you. Nay, you are exultant because of your present. Go back to them, so we will most certainly come to them with hosts which they shall have no power to oppose, and we will most certainly expel them therefrom in abasement, and they shall be in a state of ignominy. He said : O Chiefs : which of you can bring to me a throne for her before they come to me in submission ? One audacious among the jinn said : I will bring it to you before you rise up from your place ; and most surely I am strong (and) trusty for it. One who had the knowledge of the Book said : I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye. Then when he saw it settled beside him, he said : This is of the grace of my Lord that He may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful ; and whoever is he is grateful only for his own soul, and whoever is ungrateful then surely my Lord is self-sufficient Honoured. He said : Alter her throne for her ; we will see whether she follows the right way or is of those who do not go aright. So when she came, it was said : Is your throne like this ? She said : It is as it were the same, and we were given the knowledg before it, and we were submissive. And what she worshipped besides Allah prevented her, surely she was of an unbelieving people. It was said to her : Enter the palace ; but when she saw it she deemed it to be a great expanse of water, and bared her legs. He said : Surely it is a palace made smooth with glass. She said : My Lord : surely I have been unjust to myself, and submit with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of the worlds".¹³⁵

The Holy Quran mentioning the destruction of Saba mentions the power of Solomon bestowed on him by his Lord :

"And (We made) the wind (subservient) to Solomon, which made a months' journey in the morning and a months' journey in the evening, and We made an abundance of molten brass to flow out for him, and of the jinn where were those who worked before him by the command of his Lord, and whoever turned aside from Our command from among them, We made him taste of the

chastisement of burning. They made for him what he pleased of fortresses of images, and bowls (large) as watering troughs and cooking-pots that will not move from their place ; give thanks O family of David : and very few of my servants are grateful. But when We decreed death for him, naught showed them his death but a creature of the earth that ate away his staff ; and when it fell down the jinn came to know plainly that if they had known the unseen, they would not have tarried in abasing torment".¹³⁶

The Holy Quran mentions Solomon's greatness and that his enemies were subjected to him. It also indicates the worthlessness of his successor :

"And We gave to David Solomon ; most excellent the servant. Surely he was frequent in returning (to Allah). When there were brought to him in the evening (horses) still when standing, swift when running. Then he said : Surely I love the good things on account of the remembrance of my Lord until they were hidden behind the veil, (he said) : Bring them back to me, so he began to stroke their legs and necks. And certainly We tried Solomon, and We put on his throne a body so he turned (to Allah). He said : My Lord : do thou forgive me and grant me a kingdom which is not fit for any one after me : surely Thou art the Great Giver. Then We made the wind subservient to him ; it made his command to run gently wherever he desired. And the devils, every builder and diver. And others fettered in chains. This is Our free gift, therefore, give freely or withhold, without reckoning. And most surely he had a nearness to Us and an excellent resort".¹³⁷

THE PROPHET JESUS

Jesus is wonderful personality in world history. His coming in, and going from this world are both miraculous on one side and disputed on the other. And on this very difference of opinion while the Jews reject him and say blasphemous words about him, the Christians adore and worship him. Mr. E.R. Pike says :

"Jesus Christ (Jesus—the Greek form of Joshua ; Christ from the Greek for the Anointed One, i.e. the Messiah of Jewish prophecy). The founder of the Christian faith, the Saviour, and the object of the devotion of all Christians ; the Second Person in the Holy Trinity. In the Apostles Creed it is stated that he was the only Son of God the Father Almighty, and was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell ; the third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead."¹³⁸

The orientalist explain the word 'Isa', used in Holy Quran, as follows :

"Isa, the proper name of Jesus, in the Kuran, and thence in Islam, is explained by western scholars as a form imposed upon Mhammad by the Jews and used by him in good faith. They called Jesus Esan in hatred and said that the soul of Esan had been transferred to Him".¹³⁹

In Islam, Jesus has been placed in his true picture. The Holy Quran mentions the miraculous birth of Jesus and says :

"When the angels said : O Mary : Surely Allah gives you good news with a word from him (of one) whose name is the Messiah. Jesus, son of Mary, worth of regard in this world and the hereafter and of those who are made near (to Allah). And he shall speak to the people when in the cradle and when of old age, and (he shall be) one of the good ones. She said : My Lord : When shall there be a son (born) to me, and man has not touched me ? He said : Even so, Allah creates what He pleases ; when He has decreed a matter. He only says to it, Be, and it is".¹⁴⁰

The Holy Quran gives a detailed account of the miraculous birth of Jesus and says :

"And mention Mary in the Book when she drew aside from her family to an eastern place ; so she took a veil (to screen herself) from them ; then We sent to her Our spirit, and it appeared to her as a well made man. She said : Surely I fly for refuge from you to the Beneficent God, if you are one guarding (against evil). He said : I am only a messenger of Your Lord ; That I will give you a pure boy. She said : How shall I have a boy and no mortal has yet touched me, nor have I been unchaste ? He said : Even so ; your Lord says : It is easy to Me and that We may make him a sign to men and a mercy from Us ; and it is a matter which has been decreed. So she conceived him ; then withdrew herself with him to a remote place. And the throes (of child-birth) compelled her to betake herself to the trunk of palmtree. She said ; Oh, would that I had died before this, and had been a thing quite forgotten. Then (a voice) called out to her from beneath her : Grieve not, surely your Lord has made a stream to flow beneath you : And shake towards you the trunk of the palmtree. It will drop on you fresh ripe dates. So eat and drink and refresh the eye. Then if you see any mortal, say : Surely I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent God, so I shall not speak to any man today, And she came to her people with him, carrying him. They said : O mary : Surely you have done a strange thing. O sister of Aaron : Your father was not a bad man, nor was your mother an unchaste woman. But she pointed to him. They said : How should we speak to one who is a child in the cradle. He

said : surely I am a servant of Allah ; He has given me the Book and made me a prophet. And he has made me blessed wherever I may be, and He has enjoined on me prayer and poor-rate so long as I live : And dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me insolent, unblessed : And peace on me on the day I was born, and on the day I die, and on the day I am raised to life. Such is Jesus son of Mary ; (this is) the saying of truth about which they dispute. It beseems not Allah that he should take to Himself a son, glory be to Him : when He has decreed a matter. He only says to it "Be" and it is".¹⁴¹

The Holy Quran, mentioning the blessings of God on the prophets points out this very event :

"And she who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into her of Our spirit and made her and her son a sign for the nations".¹⁴²

The same event has been mentioned as a sign in Chapter XXIII as following :

"And We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign, and We gave them a shelter on a lofty ground having meadows and springs".¹⁴³

The people who think this event to be strange and impossible should ponder over the creation of Adam :

"Surely the likeness of Jesus is with Allah as the likeness of Adam ; He created him from dust, then said to him, Be and he was. (This is) the truth from your Lord, so be not of the disputers. But whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge, then say : Come let us all our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our people and your people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the curse of Allah on the liars".¹⁴⁴

MIRACLES OF JESUS

The Holy Quran explicitly mentions the miracles of Jesus :

"An and apostle to the children of Israel : That I have come to you with a sign from your Lord that I make for you out of dust like the form of bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird with Allah's permission, and I heal the blind and the leprous, and bring the dead to life with Allah's permission, and I inform you of what you eat and what you store in your houses ; most surely there is a sign in this for you, if you are believers".¹⁴⁵

The Holy Quran reminding Jesus of the blessings bestowed on him mentions his miracles :

“When Allah will say : O Jesus son of Mary ; remember My favour on you and on your mother, when I strengthened you with the holy revelation ; you spoke to the people in the cradle and when of old age, and when I taught you the Book and the wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel ; and when you determined out of clay a thing like the form of bird by My permission, and you healed the blind and the leprous by My permission and when you brought forth the dead by My permission and when I withheld the children of Israel from you when you came to them with clear arguments ; but those who disbelieved among them said : This is nothing but clear enchantment”.¹⁴⁶

The Holy Quran further mentions another miracle of Jesus :

“When the disciples said : O Jesus, son of Mary : will your Lord consent to send down to us food from heaven : He said : Be careful of (your duty to) Allah if you are believers. They said : We desire that we should be at rest, and that we may know what you have indeed spoken the truth to us and that we may be of witnesses to it. Jesus the son of Mary said : O Allah, our Lord : Send down to us food from heaven which should be to us an ever-recurring happiness, to the first of us and to the last of us, and a sign from Thee, and grant us means of subsistence, and Thou art, the best of providers. Allah said : Surely I will send it down to you, but whoever shall disbelieve afterwards from among you, surely I will chastise him with a chastisement with which I will not chastise any one among the nations”.¹⁴⁷

ASCENSION OF JESUS

No issue is more disputed among the Jews and Christians than the end of Jesus. The Holy Quran rejects all accusations of Jews against Jesus and Mary and reveals the truth relating to the crucifixion of Jesus :

“And their saying : surely we have killed the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the apostle of Allah ; and they did not kill him nor did they crucify him, but the matter) was made dubious to them, and most surely those who differ therein are only in a doubt about it ; they have no knowledge respecting it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for sure. Nay : Allah exalted him in His presence ; and Allah is Mighty, Wise. And there is not one of the followers of the Book but most certainly believes in him before his death, and on the day of resurrection he shall be a witness against them”.¹⁴⁸

THE PROPHET YUNUS

“Jonah” : One of the minor prophets of the Old Testament ; the book that bears his name is not a prophecy, However, so much as a narrative. Jonah is sent by Jehovah to Nineveh to prophesy its destruction because of its sins, but he is

fearful of his reception and sails instead to Tarrhish. On the way a tempest rises, and lots are cast by the sailors to decide for whose cause it has been sent. The lot falls on Jonah, and he is cast into the sea. Whereupon he is swallowed by a "great fish" and, after spending three days and nights in its belly, is cast up on dry land. Later he carried out his mission. The book may date from about 400 BC".¹⁴⁹

The Holy Quran mentions the deliverance of the prophets from distress and in this series tells of divine favour bestowed on Yunus :

"And Jonah was most surely of the prophets. When he fled to a ship completely laden. So he shared (with them), but was of those who are cast off. So the fish drew him with its mouth while he did that for which he was blamed. But had it not been that he was of those who glorify (Us). He would certainly have tarried in its belly to the day when they are raised. Then We cast him on to the vacant surface of the earth while he was sick. And We caused to grow up for him a gourd-plant. And We sent him to a hundred thousand, rather they exceeded. And they believed, so We gave them provision till a time".¹⁵⁰

The Holy Quran has given some more details about prophet Yunus :

"And Jonah, when he went away in wrath, so he thought that We would not straiten him, so he called out afflictions ; There is no God but Thou, glory be to Thee ; surely I am of those who make themselves to suffer loss. So We responded to him and delivered him from the grief, and thus do We deliver the believers".¹⁵¹

The Holy Quran mentions the repentance of the people of Yunus :

"And wherefore was there not a town which should believe so that their belief should have profited them but the people of Jonah. When they believed, We removed from them the chastisement of disgrace in this world's life and we gave them provision till a time".¹⁵²

The Holy Prophet is advised to face the difficulties and the distress caused by the unbelievers, with patience and not follow the way, the Prophet Jonah adopted in his distress.

"So wait patiently for the judgement of your Lord, and be not like the companion of the fish, when he cried while he was in distress. Were it not that favour from his Lord had overtaken him, he would certainly have been cast down upon the naked ground while he was blamed. Then his Lord chose him, and He made him of the good".¹⁵³

THE PROPHET JOB (AIYUB)

Job : An ancient chieftain or emir in the land of Uz, usually identified with Edom or the country to the south and east of Palestine, whose name is given to a dramatic poem in the O.T.

The Holy Quran, telling that Allah delivers the prophets from their enemies, mentions Job :

“And Job, when he cried to his Lord, (saying) : Harm has afflicted me, and Thou art the most Merciful of the merciful. Therefore, We responded to him and took off what harm he had, and We gave him his family and the like of them with them : a mercy from Us and a reminder to the worshippers”¹⁵⁴.

The Holy Quran mentions the reward bestowed on Job for his patience :

“And remember Our servant Job, when he called upon his Lord : The devil has afflicted me with toil and torment. Urge with your foot : here is a cool washing-place and a drink, And We gave him his family and the like of them with them, as a mercy from Us, and as a reminder to those possessed of understanding. And take in your hand somewhat of worldly goods, then be satisfied with it and do not incline to what is false ; surely We found him patient ; most excellent the servant : Surely he was frequent in returning (to Allah)”¹⁵⁵.

THE PROPHET JACOB

The Holy Quran depicts the plot against Joseph by his brothers and points out the insight of Jacob :

“So when they had gone off with him and agreed that they should put him down at the bottom of the pit, and We revealed to him ; you will most certainly inform them of this their affair while they do not perceive. And they came to their father at nightfall, weeping. They said : O our father : surely we went off racing and left Joseph by our goods, so the wolf devoured him, and you will not believe us though we are truthful. And they brought his shirt with false blood upon it. He said : Nay, your souls have made the matter light for you, but patience is good, and Allah is He whose help is sought for against what you describe”¹⁵⁶.

The Holy Quran tells that when Yusuf disclosed his identity to his brothers he asked his brothers to take his shirt and cast that on the face of his father causing renewal of his sight and to bring him with all families to Egypt. Jacob smells the shirt before its arrival :

“Lay it on my father’s face. He will become (again) a seer. And when the caravan had departed, their father said : Most surely I perceive the smell of Joseph.

MANIFEST EVIDENCE/JOSEPH’S FIRMNESS UNDER TEMPTATIONS

The Holy Quran mentions the moral and ethical trial of Joseph and confirms his firmness and innocence :

“And she, in whose house he was, sought to make himself yield (to her), and she made fast the doors and said : Come ! he said : I seek Allah’s refuge, surely my Lord made good my abode ; Surely the unjust do not prosper. And certainly she made for him, and he would have made for her, were it not that he had seen the manifest evidence of his Lord; thus (it was) that We might turn away from him evil and indecency, surely he was one of Our sincere servants”.¹⁵⁸

TRUE INTERPRETATION (DREAM OF PRISON-MATES)

The Holy Quran mentions that during the imprisonment of Joseph two youths entered the prison ; One of them said that he saw himself pressing wine and the other said that he saw himself carrying bread on his head, of which birds ate, they requested him to inform them of its interpretation. Joseph preached and delivered a sermon and afterward said :

“O my two mates of the prison ! as for one of you, he shall give his lord to drink wine ; and as for the other, he shall be crucified, so that the birds shall eat from his head : the matter is decreed of concerning which you inquired.”¹⁵⁹

TRUE INTERPRETATION (KING’S VISION)

The Holy Quran mentions the blessings of Allah bestowed on Joseph to interpret truly of the vision of the King who saw seven fat Kine which seven lean ones devoured and seven green ears and seven others dry and asked his chiefs to interpret his dream, who replied that they did not know. The wine-giver of the King remembered Joseph and asked the King to let him go and then requested Joseph :

“Joseph : O truthful one : explain to us seven fat kine which seven lean ones devoured, and seven green ears and (seven) others dry, that I may go back to the people so that they may know : He said : You shall sow for seven years

as usual, then what you reap leave it in its ear except a little of which you eat. Then there shall come after that seven years of hardship which shall eat away all that you have beforehand laid up in store for them, except a little of what you shall have preserved. Then there will come after that a year in which people shall have rain and in which they shall press (grapes)."¹⁶⁰

THE SHIRT OF JOSEPH

The Holy Quran states that when Joseph disclosed his identity and forgave his brothers he said :

"Take this my shirt and cast it on the face of my father, he will come to see and come to me with all your families. And when the caravan had departed, their father said : Most surely I perceive the smell of Joseph, unless you pronounce me to be weak in judgement, They said : By Allah, you are most surely in your old error. So when the bearer of good news came he cast it on his face so he became clear-sighted. He said : Did I not say to you that I know from Allah what you do not know."¹⁶¹

TRUE INTERPRETATION (SELF VISION)

The Holy Quran, at the opening of Chapter XII, mentions Joseph's vision in his childhood that he saw eleven stars and the sun and the moon making obeisance to him. When he told his dream to his father he prohibited him to relate it to his brothers and foretold that the Lord would choose him and teach him the interpretation of sayings. When Joseph was bestowed power and authority in Egypt and on his call his parents came in to him he raised his parents upon the throne and they (parents and his brothers) made obeisance to him, he said :

"my father ! this is the significance of my vision of old : my Lord has indeed made it to be true and He was indeed kind to me when He brought me forth from the prison and brought you from the desert after that the devil had shown dissensions between me and my brothers : surely my Lord is benignant to whom He pleases : surely He is the Knowing, the Wise"¹⁶²

THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PEACE AND BLESSINGS OF ALLAH BE UPON HIM)

The Holy Prophet was bestowed by so many miracles. Al-Suyuti says :

"بانه جمع له كل ما اوتيه الانبياء من معجزات و فضائل و لم يجتمع ذلك لغيره بل اختص كل بنوع و اوتى الشقاق القمر. تسليم الحجر. حنين الجذع و بنع الماء من بين الاصابع و لم يثبت لواحد من الانبياء مثل ذلك"¹⁶³ -

Al-Nasafi enumerates the miracles of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) :

”ثم ان نبينا محمد بن عبدالله بن عبدالمطلب بن هاشم بن عبد مناف رسول لانه ادعى النبوة و ظهرت المعجزات على يديه كانشقاق القمر. و انجذاب الشجر و تسليم الحجر عليه و نبع الماء من بين اصابه و حنين الخشب و شكاية الناقة و شهادة الشاة المصلية و شرب الكثير من البشر القليل من الماء و اظهرها القرآن فهو من اعجب الايات و ابين الدلالات“¹⁶⁴ -

Al-Ghazzali has written a full chapter on the miracles of the Holy Propht (P.B.U.H.). He opens this chapter with the mention of his high morals, unblemished character, and then after enumerating fortyfive of his miracles, concludes :

”الى غير ذلك من اياته و معجزاته صلى الله عليه وسلم و انما اقتصرنا على المستفيض و من يستريب في انخراق العادة على يده و يزعم ان احاد هذه الوقائع لم تنقل تواترا بل المتواتر هو القرآن فقط كمن يستريب في شجاعة على و سخاوة حاتم الطائي و معاوم ان احاد وقائعهم غير متواترة و لكن مجموع الوقائع يورث علما ضروريا ثم لا يتمارى في تواتر القرآن و هي المعجزة الكبرى الباقية بين الخلق و ليس لنبي معجزة باقية سواه صلى الله عليه وسلم“¹⁶⁵ -

It is obvious that the greatest and the last of the prophets was bestowed so many miracles. But only some popular miracles, which have been mentioned in the Holy Quran, are being stated here.

DIVINE HELP

The Holy Quran mentions of a sign of Divine Help in the battle of Badr :

”Indeed there was a sign for you in the two hosts (which) met together in encounter ; one party fighting in the way of Allah and the other unbelieving, whom they saw twice as many as themselves with the sight of the eye ; and Allah strengthens with His aid whom He pleases ; most surely there is a lesson in this for those who have sight“¹⁶⁶

The Holy Quran has further indicated about this Divine Help :

”And Allah did certainly assist you at Badr when you were weak, be careful of (your duty to) Allah, then, that you may give thanks. When you said to the believers : Does it not suffice you that your Lord should assist you with three thousand of the angels sent down ? Yes ; if you remain patient and are on your guard, and they come upon you in a headlong manner, your Lord will assist you with five thousand of the havoc-making angels“¹⁶⁷

A further mention to the battle of Badr, somewhat in detail, has been made in chapt. VIII. The Holy Quran says :

”And when Allah promised you one of the two parties that it shall be yours and you loved that the one not armed should be yours, and Allah desired to manifest the truth of what was true by His words and to cut off the root of

unbelievers. That He may manifest the truth of what was true and show the falsehood of what was false, though the guilty disliked. When you sought aid from your Lord, so He answered you : I will assist you with a thousand of the angels following one another".¹⁶⁸

The Holy Quran gives detail of what sort of Divine Help came to strengthen the believers, and regards all the victory due to His assistance :

"So you did not slay it was Allah who slew them, and you did not smite when you smote (the enemy) but it was Allah who smote".¹⁶⁹

Further it is mentioned :

"And remember when you were few, deemed weak in the land, fearing lest people might carry you off by force, but He sheltered you and strengthened you with His aid and gave you of the good things that you may give thanks".¹⁷⁰

Divine Help was bestowed on the Muslims on various occasions :

"Certainly Allah helped you in many battlefields and on the day of Hunain, when your great numbers made you vain, but they availed you nothing and the earth became trait to you notwithstanding its spaciousness, then you turned back retreating. Then Allah sent down His tranquility upon His Prophet and upon the believers, and sent down hosts which you did not see, and chastised those who disbelieved, and that is the reward of the unbelievers".¹⁷¹

The Holy Quran also mentions the Divine assistance bestowed on the occasion of the cave :

"If you will not aid him, Allah certainly aided him when those who disbelieved expelled him, he being the second of the two, when they were both in the cave, when he said to his companion : Grieve not, surely Allah is with us. So Allah sent down His tranquility upon him and strengthened him with hosts which you did not see, and made lowest the word of those who disbelieved : and the word of Allah, that is the highest : and Allah is Mighty Wise".¹⁷²

The Holy Quran also mentions the Divine help provided on the occasion when the allies (Idolators, hypocrites and Jews) attacked Medina ; the entire forces numbering ten thousand, according to some, while the Muslims were only about a tenth of that number :

"O you who believe ! call to mind the favor of Allah to you when there came down upon you hosts, so We sent against them a strong wind and hosts that you saw not, and Allah is seeing what you do".¹⁷³

ASCENSION OF THE HOLY PROPHET (P.B.U.H.)

The Holy Quran in explicit words refers to the miracle of ascension of the Holy Prophet :

“Glory be to Him Who made His servant to go on a night from the sacred mosque to the remote mosque of which We have blessed the precincts, so that We may show to him some of Our signs : surely He is the Hearing, the Seeing”.¹⁷⁴

A further detailed account of this ascension is given in Chapter LIII as follows :

“Consider the star when it goes down. Your companion did not err nor did he deviate. Nor does he speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed. The Lord of Mighty Power has taught him. The Lord of Strength ; so he attained completion. And he is in the highest part of the horizon. Then he drew near, then drew nearer. So he was the measure of two bows or closer still. And He revealed to His servant what He revealed. The heart was not untrue in (making him see) what he saw. What ! do you then dispute with him as to what he saw ? And certainly he saw Him in another descent. At the farthest lote-tree ; Near which is the garden, the place to be resorted to. When that which covers, covered the lote-tree. The eye did not turn aside, nor did it exceed the limit. Certainly he saw of the greatest signs of his Lord”.¹⁷⁵

RENDERING ASUNDER OF THE MOON

The Holy Quran mentions the unprecedented miracle of rending asunder of the moon by the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) :

“The hour drew nigh and the moon did rend asunder. And if they see a sign they turn aside and say : a powerful or continual enchantment ! And they call (it) a lie, and follow their low desires ; and every affair is settled”.¹⁷⁶

INFORMATION OF SECRET

“And when the Prophet secretly communicated a piece of information to one of his wives—but when she informed (others) of it, and Allah made him to Anware, informed me. If you both turn to Allah, then indeed your hearts are already inclined (to this) and if you back up each other against him, then surely Allah it is who is his Guardiand, and Gabriel and the believers that do good, and the angels after that are the aiders”.¹⁷⁷

THE ELEPHANT
OR

(THE PROTECTION OF THE KA'BA)

The Holy Quran mentions the Divine help on the memorable invasion of Makkah by Abraha, the Christian viceroy of the king of Abyssina at Yemen. His attempt to destroy the holy place was smashed by prompt divine help :

“Have you not considered how your Lord dealt with the possessors of the elephant. Did He not cause their war to end in confusion. And send down upon them birds in flocks, Casting against them hard stones, So He rendered them like straw eaten up”.¹⁷⁸

OUTSTANDING EXISTING MIRACLE OF THE HOLY QURAN ITSELF

Miracles are so wrought in the text of the Holy Quran that they are inseparable from it. It is a great blessing for the Muslims, that when all the miracles, revealed and mentioned by the Holy Quran do not exist today, the miracle of the inimitability of the Holy Quran does exist and will be eternal being an eminent evidence and explicit witness for the credibility of miracles. No other book of any religion has ever claimed its inimitability and uniqueness while the Holy Quran not only claimed but also challenged and foretold that none can bring the like of it. Consequently the internal and external (historical) witnesses prove its surpassing miraculous nature.

God Almighty has said :

“And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call on your helpers besides Allah if you are truthful. But if you do (it) not-and never shall you do (it)--then be on your guard against the fire of which men and stones are the fuel, it is prepared for the unbelievers”.¹⁷⁹

A similar challenge is contained in the following verses :

“Or do they say : He has forged it ? Say : Then bring a chapter like this and invite whom you can besides Allah, if you are truthful”.¹⁸⁰

“Or do they say: He has forged it. Say : Then bring ten forged chapters like it and call upon whom you can Allah, if you are truthful”.¹⁸¹

While in 2 : 23 and 10 : 38 a challenge is made to produce a chapter like it in 11 : 13 the challenge is made to produce chapter like it even if they are forged and not having the original characteristics. But none could bring it. The same inability has been foretold in the following verse :

“Say if men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Quran, they could not bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others”.¹⁸²

The Holy Quran is regarded a great sign in comparison to other signs demanded by the unbelievers :

“And they say : Why are not signs sent down upon him from his Lord ? Say : The signs are only with Allah, and I am only a plain warner. Is it not enough for them that We have revealed to you the book which is recited to them. Most surely there is mercy in this and a reminder for a people who believe”.¹⁸³

FOOT NOTES

1. Al-Quran, 2 : 50.
2. Al-Quran, 7 : 136-138.
3. Al-Quran, 8 : 54.
4. Al-Quran, 10 : 90-92.
5. Al-Quran, 17 : 103.
6. Al-Quran, 20 : 77-78.
7. Al-Quran, 26 , 60-67.
8. Al-Quran, 28 : 40.
9. It is noticeable that Pharaoh makes his people believe that superiority is based on material achievement.
10. Al-Quran, 43 : 51-56.
11. Al-Quran, 2 : 55-56.
12. Al-Quran, 4 : 153.
13. Al-Quran, 2 : 57.
14. Al-Quran, 7 : 160.
15. Al-Quran, 20 : 80-82.
16. Al-Quran, 2 : 60.
17. Al-Quran, 7 : 160.
18. Al-Quran, 2 : 63-64.
19. Al-Quran. 2 : 93,
20. Al-Quran, 4 ; 154.
21. Al-Quran, 7 : 171.
22. Al-Quran, 2 : 65-66.
23. Al-Quran, 5 : 60.
24. Al-Quran, 7 : 163-166.
25. Al-Quran, 2 : 73.
26. Al-Quran, 2 : 248.
27. Al-Quran, 5 : 26. It will be interesting to note that this kind of behaviour from Israelites was due to their loss of capacity to appreciate the Divine favours. Hence they were made to wait till the next generation' free from the limitations of their parents, came into being with the potentiality to appreciate the Divine favours.
28. Al-Quran, 7 : 104-126.
29. Al-Quran. 10 : 75-82.
30. Al-Quran, 20 : 17-24.
31. Al-Quran, 20 : 56-73.
32. Al-Quran, 26 : 29-33.
33. Al-Quran, 26 : 34-51.
34. Al-Quran. 27 : 9-13.
35. Al-Quran, 28 : 38.
36. Al-Quran. 7 : 130-136.
37. Al-Quran, 17 : 101-103.
38. Al-Quran, 7 : 142-144.
39. Al-Quran, 18 : 60-64.
40. Bukhari.

41. Al-Quran, 18 : 65-82.
42. Al-Quran, 28 : 4.
43. Al-Quran, 28 : 7-13.
44. Al-Quran, 20 : 37-40.
45. Al-Quran, 28 : 76-81.
46. Al-Quran, 2 : 259.
47. Al-Quran, 3 : 37-40.
48. Al-Quran, 19 : 1-11.
49. Al-Quran, 21 : 89-90.
50. Ency. of Religion & Religions, p. 3.
51. Al-Quran, 2 : 258.
52. Al-Quran, 2 : 260.
53. Al-Quran, 11 : 71-73.
54. Al-Quran : 51 : 28-30.
55. Al-Quran, 21 : 48.
56. Al-Quran, 21 : 74.
57. Al-Quran, 21 : 76.
58. Al-Quran, 21 : 78.
59. ibid.
60. Al-Quran, 21 : 83-84.
61. Al-Quran, 21 : 85.
62. ibid.
63. Al-Quran, 21 : 88.
64. Al-Quran, 21 : 89-90.
65. Al-Quran, 21 : 91.
66. Al-Quran, 21 : 51-70.
67. Al-Quran, 29 : 24.
68. Al-Quran, 37 : 97-98.
69. Al-Quran, 37 : 102-108.
70. Ency. of Religion and Religions. P. 278.
71. Al-Quran, 7 : 59-64.
72. Al-Quran, 10 : 73.
73. Al-Quran, 11 : 36-49.
74. Al-Quran, 21 : 76-77.
75. Al-Quran, 23 : 23-30.
76. Al-Quran, 54 : 10-15.
77. Al-Quran, 71 : 1-28.
78. Shorter Ency. of Islam, 1961, P. 140.
79. Al-Quran, 7 : 65-72.
80. Al-Quran, 11 : 50-60.
81. Al-Quran, 41 : 15-16.
82. Al-Quran, 26 : 123-140.
83. Al-Quran, 46 : 21-25.
84. Al-Quran, 54 : 18-22 ; 69 : 4-8 ; 89 : 6-8.
85. Shorter Ency, of Islam, p. 500.
86. How clearly indicates the Holy Quran that Thamud were the successors of 'Ad, The

orientalists should make further researches to trace the history of 'Ad when they already acknowledge the history of Thamud.

87. Al-Quran, 71 : 73-79.
88. An indication is cited that the period of the promise of chastisement was three days.
89. In Chapter IX the chastisement is stated to be the earthquake. Here mention of rumbling shows that the said earthquake was not silent but with a dreadful and tremendous noise. Cf. Ency. of Islam (Op. cit.) which tried to make the mention of two to be a ground for doubt.
90. Al-Quran, 11 : 61-68.
91. This shows that the turn or portion of water was divided among the she-camel and his people which seems to be intolerable by them.
92. Al-Quran, 26 : 141-159.
93. Al-Quran, 54 : 23-32.
94. Al-Quran, 15 : 80-84.
95. Al-Quran, 17 : 59.
96. This explicitly indicates that the rejectors and opponents made a plot against the prophet. So God dashed their planning, and His chastiment overtook them.
97. Al-Quran, 27 : 45-53.
98. Al-Quran, 29 : 38.
99. Al-Quran, 51 : 43-45.
100. Al-Quran, 53 : 50-51.
101. Al-Quran, 69 : 4-5.
102. Al-Quran, 91 : 11-15.
103. Al-Quran, 85 : 17-18.
104. Al-Quran, 89 : 9.
105. Al-Quran, 9 : 70.
106. Ency. of Islam, art. "Lut".
107. Al-Quran, 7 : 80-84.
108. Al-Quran, 11 : 77-83.
109. It shows that the whole procedure of escape was revealed to the prophet. The next verse (66) confirms this idea.
110. Al-Quran, 15 : 61-77.
111. Al-Quran, 26 : 160-175.
112. Al-Quran, 21 : 74.
113. Al-Quran, 9 : 70 ; 21 : 71 ; 27 : 54-58 ; 29 : 26-35 ; 37 : 133-138.
114. Al-Quran, 11 : 87.
115. Shorter Ency. of Islam. p. 544.
116. Al-Quran, 7 : 85-93.
117. This verse shows that they had a respect for Shuaib but on his preaching they made their first attempt to compromise with him not to interfere in their affairs.
118. The verse explicitly shows that the period of the people of Shuaib is after that of the people of Lot. It also mentions the order of the prophets Noah, Hud, Salih and Lot respectively.
119. This verse shows that Shuaib was weak financially and this is wrong to say that he had no prestige. cf. v. 87.
120. Al-Quran, 11 : 84-95.

121. Al-Quran: 15 : 78-79.
122. The verse shows that the rejection by the opponents reached to its climax and a sign was demanded.
123. Al-Quran, 26 : 176-191.
124. Al-Quran, 29 : 36-37 ; 38 : 13 ; 50 : 14.
125. Al-Quran, 2 : 251.
126. Ency. of Religion and Religions, p. 119.
127. Shorter Ency. of Islam, art. "Dawood".
128. Al-Quran, 21 : 79-80.
129. Al-Quran, 34 : 10-11.
130. Al-Quran, 38 : 17-26.
131. Ency. of Religion & Religious, P. 357.
132. Ency. of Islam, P. 549.
133. Al-Quran, 21 : 78-82.
134. The words "Tair" (bird) and "hudhud" indicate that horse or man cannot be meant, as interpreted by the modernists.
135. Al-Quran, 27 : 16-44.
136. Al-Quran, 34 : 12-14.
137. Al-Quran, 38 : 30-40,
138. Ency. of Religion & Religions, P. 209.
139. Shorter Ency. of Islam, P. 173.
140. Al-Quran, 3 : 44-46.
141. Al-Quran, 10 : 16-35.
142. Al-Quran, 21 : 91.
143. Al-Quran, 23 : 50.
144. Al-Quran, 3 : 58-60.
145. Al-Quran, 3 : 48.
146. Al-Quran, 5 : 110.
147. Al-Quran, 5 : 112-115.
148. Al-Quran. 4 : 157.159.
149. The Ency. of Religion and Religions, art. "Jonah".
150. Al-Quran, 37 : 139-148.
151. Al-Quran, 21 : 87-88.
152. Al-Quran, 10 : 98.
153. Al-Quran, 68 : 48-50.
154. Al-Quran, 21 : 83-84.
155. Al-Quran, 38 : 41-44.
156. Al-Quran, 12 : 15-18.
157. Al-Quran, 12 : 94-96.
158. Al-Quran, 12 : 23-24.
159. Al-Quran, 12 : 41.
160. Al-Quran, 12 : 46-49.
161. Al-Quran, 12 : 93-96.
162. Al-Quran, 12 : 100.
163. Al-Suyuti, al-Namuzaj al-Labib fi Khasais al-Habib, m.s.n.d.

164. Al-'Umda, p. 16.
165. Al-Ghazzali, Ihya Ulum al-Din, Egypt 1939, vol. II, pp. 384-388.
166. Al-Quran, 3 : 12.
167. Al-Quran, 3 : 122-124.
168. Al-Quran, 8 : 7-9.
169. Al-Quran, 8 : 17.
170. Al-Quran, 8 : 26.
171. Al-Quran, 9 : 25-26.
172. Al-Quran, 9 : 40.
173. Al-Quran, 33 : 9.
174. Al-Quran, 17 : 1,
175. Al-Quran, 53 : 1-18.
176. Al-Quran, 54 : 1—3.
177. Al-Quran, 66 : 3-4.
178. Al-Quran, 105 : 1-5.
179. Al-Quran, 2 : 23-24.
180. Al-Quran, 10 : 38.
181. Al-Quran, 11, 13.
182. Al-Quran, 17 ; 88.
183. Al-Quran, 29 : 50-51.

164. Al-Quran 2: 10
 165. Al-Quran 2: 11
 166. Al-Quran 2: 12
 167. Al-Quran 2: 13
 168. Al-Quran 2: 14
 169. Al-Quran 2: 15
 170. Al-Quran 2: 16
 171. Al-Quran 2: 17
 172. Al-Quran 2: 18
 173. Al-Quran 2: 19
 174. Al-Quran 2: 20
 175. Al-Quran 2: 21
 176. Al-Quran 2: 22
 177. Al-Quran 2: 23
 178. Al-Quran 2: 24
 179. Al-Quran 2: 25
 180. Al-Quran 2: 26
 181. Al-Quran 2: 27
 182. Al-Quran 2: 28
 183. Al-Quran 2: 29
 184. Al-Quran 2: 30
 185. Al-Quran 2: 31
 186. Al-Quran 2: 32
 187. Al-Quran 2: 33
 188. Al-Quran 2: 34
 189. Al-Quran 2: 35
 190. Al-Quran 2: 36
 191. Al-Quran 2: 37
 192. Al-Quran 2: 38
 193. Al-Quran 2: 39
 194. Al-Quran 2: 40
 195. Al-Quran 2: 41
 196. Al-Quran 2: 42
 197. Al-Quran 2: 43
 198. Al-Quran 2: 44
 199. Al-Quran 2: 45
 200. Al-Quran 2: 46

CHAPTER III

OPINIONS OF MUSLIM THEOLOGIANS, MUTKAL-
LIMIN AND MUSLIM PHILOSOPHERS REGARDING
MIRACLES

“Does God Exist? If He exists, can He communicate with His creatures? Is there any necessity for such communication? What forms could such communication take? Is there any way in which God could seal and attest a revelation to men? If such revelation has been made through prophets, on what grounds have such prophets asserted the validity of their mission and the truth of their message”.¹

These are the glowing words stated by Richard J. McCarthy, in the introduction of Kitab al-Bayan, a treatise on the nature of the Miracle and its differentiation from Trickery, Divination and magic Spells, a nice attempt made in this field by the celebrated Muslim theologian, al-Baqillani. Mc Carthy has rightly pointed out in these questions the necessity of miracles as an evidence of the divine revelation.

In the early years of Islam, discussions concerning the credibility of miracle and divine origin of the Holy Quran did not arise. But when, with the expansion of Islam, Muslims, came into close contact with Greek philosophy and Christian ideas about the logos & Christ's miracles such discussions did arise and the theologians of Islam contributed a lot in this field.

CREDIBILITY OF MIRACLE

The credibility of miracle has been regarded an admitted fact by almost all the celebrated theologians of Islam. The great Imam, Abu Hanifa (d. 150) says :

”والايات ثابتة و الكرامات للاولياء حق“²

It is explained further by Abul Muntaha, in his commentry on al-Fiqh al-Akbar as follows :

”والايات اى المعجزات ثابتة للانبياء عليهم السلام يعنى ان خوارق العادة التى تصدر عن الانبياء كاحياء الاموات وانفجار الماء من بين الاصابع و كعدم احراق النار و غيرها تسمى ايات

لان الله تعالى يريد بصدورها عنهم ان تكون علامة و دليلا على نبوتهم و صدقهم و الكرامات
للاولياء حق اى الخوارق التى تصدر عن الاولياء تسمى كرامات لان الله تعالى يريد بصدورها
عنهم اكرامهم و اعزازهم و الولى فى اللغة قريب فاذا كان العبد قريبا من حضرة الله تعالى
بسبب كثرة طاعته و كثرة اخلاصه كان الرب تعالى قريبا منه برحمته و فضله و احسانه^٥

The great theologian al-Ghazzali, mentioning the credibility of Prophethood, regards miracle to be a proof :

”و يصدر منه فعل هو دلالة الشخص على ذلك الخبر و على امره بتبليغ الخبر و يصدر منه
فعل خارق للعادة مقرونا بدعوى ذلك الشخص الرمالة فليس شئ من ذلك محالا لذاته“^٥

Al-Ghazzali cites an example :

”لوتحدى الناس بين يدي ملك على جنده انه رسول الملك اليهم و ان الملك اوجب طاعته
عليهم فى قسمة الارزاق و الاقطاعات فطالبوه بالبرهان و الملك ساكت فقال ايها الملك ان كنت
صادقا فى ما ادعية. فصدقنى بان تقوم على سريرك ثلاث مرات على التوالى و تقعد على خلاف
عادتك فقام الملك عقيب التماسه على التوالى ثلاث مرات ثم قعد حصل للمحاضرين علم ضرورى
بانه رسول الملك . . . فاذا خالف العادة بفعله كان ذلك كقوله انت رسولى“^٥

Abdul Qadir (d.429 A.H.) enumerates the miracles of various prophets and proves that all the prophets were given particular miracles :

”كانت معجزة ادم عليه السلام علمه بالاسماء من غير درس ولا قراءة كتاب و كانت معجزة
نوح الطوفان و خلاصه منه و معجزة هود الريح و ما كان من شانها مع قوم عاد و معجزة صالح
الناقة و الصيحة التى دمرت على القوم و معجزة ابراهيم عليه السلام النجاة من النار و معجزة
موسى اليد البيضاء و قلب الحصاحية و حل العقدة من لسانه و سائر الايات التسع التى كانت
له و معجزة داود تايين الحديد له و معجزة سليمان الريح و تسخير الجن و الشياطين له و
معجزة عيسى احياء الموتى و ابراء الاكمه و الابرص و نجو ذلك و كذلك كل نبي له معجزة
مخصوصة و اجتمعت لنبينا محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم جميع وجوه المعجزات التى تفرقت
فى الانبياء“^٦

The famous theologian, al-Baqillani, discussing the credibility of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. in his celebrated book “Kitab al-Tamhid”, regards miracles as its established proofs :

”ما ظهر على يده صلى الله عليه من الايات الباهرة و المعجزات الفاهرة و الحجج النيرة
و الخارقة للعادة و الخارجة عما عليه العادة و تركيب الطبيعة و الله سبحانه لا يظهر المعجزات ولا
ينقض العادات الا للدلالة على صدق صاحبها و كشف قناعه و ايجاب الاقرار بنبوته و الخضوع
لطاعته و الانقياد لاوامره و نواهيته“^٧

The great scholar Ibn Hazm regards miracles to be an evidence :

”قد صبح كل ما ذكرنا من المعجزات الظاهرة من الانبياء عليهم السلام شهادة من الله تعالى لهم
يصدق بها اقوالهم - فقد وجب علينا الانقياد لما اتوا به و لزمنا تيقن كل ما قالوا“^٨

The great theologian, Najmuddin Abu Hafs Umar bin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Nasafi (d. 537), in his celebrated book, "Aqaid" (Creeds of Sunnites), discussing the credibility of prophethood regards miracles to be a support for the prophets :

”و في ارسال الرسل حكمة - وقد ارسل الله رسله من البشر الى بشر مبشرين و منذرين و مبينين للناس ما يحتاجون اليه من امور الدنيا و ايدهم بالمعجزات المتناقضة للعادات“⁹

D. B. Macdonald, in his book, "Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory" has translated the full treatise in English. The translation of the above quotation is as follows :

“And in the sending of Apostles (rasults) is an advantage and God has sent Apostles of flesh into flesh with good tidings, warning and explaining to men, the things of the world and of faith, of which they have need. And He has aided them with miracles (mujizat) which break the order (accustomed law) of nature”¹⁰.

The great scholar, Abul Barakat Abdullah bin Ahmad bin Mahmood al-Nasafi (d 710), regards the miracle to be the very proof of the prophethood and gives it great significance and importance :

”ثم اذا ادعى احد الرسالة في زمان جوازها لا يجب قبول قوله بدون المعجزة“¹¹

He explains it further; citing an example :

”انه لما ادعى الرسالة وقال اية صدق دعواى ان الله تعالى ارسلنى ان يفعل كذا ففعل الله تعالى ذلك كان منه تصديقا له في دعواه الرسالة كقوله له عقيب دعواه صدقت“¹²

He further repeats the same example as cited above by al-Ghazzali :

”يا ايها الملك ان كنت صادقا في كلامى فيخالف عادتك و قم واقعد ثلاثا فاذا فعل الملك ذلك عند سماع هذا الكلام كان منه تصديقا لداعوه نازلا منزلة قوله صدقت“¹³

Sad al-Din al-Taftazani (d. 791 A. H) a pupil of Adud al-Din al-Iji, in his commentary on the creed of Najm al-Din al-Nasafi, further explains the miracles to be a supporting evidence as follows :

“And He has aided them that is, the prophets with evidentiary miracles (al-mujizat) which contradict the customary way of things/‘Mujizat’ is the plural of ‘mujiza’ and it is something that appears contrary to the customary way of things (al-ada) at the hands of one who claims the office of the prophet, (and it happens) in such a way that those who deny, are unable to do the same thing that he does when they compete with him. For if he were not aided by the miracle it would not be necessary to accept the statement of the prophet, nor would the veracious man be clearly distinguished from the false in claiming the office of the messenger. But at the appearance of the evidentiary miracle the certainty of his veracity results in the customary way

whereby Allah creates knowledge of his veracity as a consequence of the appearance of the evidentiary miracle".¹⁴

He further repeats the same example as cited by al-Ghazzali.¹⁵

Al-Taftazani, has further affirmed the credibility of the miracles of saints :

"The grace appears on behalf of the Wali by way of contradicting (naqd), the customary way of things, such as covering a great distance in a short time as when the friend of Sulayman, namely, Asaf b. Barakhya according to the most noted traditions, brought the throne of Bilquis before the twinkling of an eye although it was a great distance off".¹⁶

Al-Taftazani has further enumerated various miracles of saintly people and explained them as follows :

"(and the appearance of food and drink and clothing at the time of need) as in the case of Maryam ... (and walking on the water) as is related of many of the Walis (and in the air) as is related to Jarar b. Abu Talib and Luqman al-Sarakhsi and others. (and such as the speaking of inanimate solid objects, and of animals, and the warding off of an approaching calamity and the protection from enemies of one who is anxious) as for speaking of inanimate solid objects, there is the tradition of Sulayman and Abul-Darda, Allah be well pleased with them both who had in front of them a bowl which praised (Allah) and both of them heard it praising, and as for the speaking of animals there is the matter of the dog addressing the companions of the cave (al-kahf). There is also the tradition of the Prophet that he said "There was a man among us driving a cow which he used for bearing burdens. Lo! it turned to him and said, I was not created for this but for plowing". The people said :

"Allah be praised ! Does a cow speak"? The Prophet replied, "I have believed it". "(and other things of the same kind) such as Umars' seeing his army at Nihawand, while on the pulpit at al-Madina, so that he spoke to the commander of his army saying, "O Sariya, the mountain, the mountain", in order to warn him of the stratagem of the enemy there behind the mountain ; and such as Sariya's hearing his speech in spite of the distance ; and like Khalid's drinking poison without being harmed and like the Nile's flowing on receipt of a letter from Umar. There are innumerable examples like these".

The celebrated theologian, Imam Fakhruddin al-Razi, under the caption (في كرامات الاوليا) argues for the credibility of Karamat as follows :

”ان حدوث الجبل لمريم من غير الذكر من خوارق العادات و حضور الرزق عندها من غير سبب ظاهر من خوارق العادات وانها ما كانت من الانبياء فوجب ان يقال ان تكون هذه الوقائع من كرامات الاولياء“¹⁷

He gives another argument :

”ان الله تعالى ابقى اصحاب الكهف ثلاث مائة سنة و ازيد في النوم احياء من غير افاة و هم ما كانوا من الانبياء فوجب ان يكون هذا من باب الكرامات“¹⁸

The great philosopher Ibn Sina believes in the credibility of miracles though he does not consider them to be violation of nature ;

”اذا بلغك ان عارفا امسك نفسه عن القوت المرزومدة غير معتادة فاسمع بالتصديق و اعتبر ذلك من مذاهب الطبيعة المشهورة“¹⁹

The above mentioned miraculous power was somewhat a negative one. He further confirms the positive one :

”اذا بلغك ان عارفا اطاق بقوته فعلا او تحريكا او حركة تخرج عن وسع مثله فلا تتلقه لكل ذلك الاستنكار فلقد تجد الى سببه سبيلا في اعتبارك مذاهب الطبيعة“²⁰

After discussing perceptible miraculous power, he argues the credibility of prophecy or foretelling :

”اذا بلغك ان عارفا حدث عن غيب فاصاب متهدما بشري او نذير فصدق ولا يتعسرن عليك الايمان به فان لذلك في مذاهب الطبيعة اسبابا معلومة“²¹

The most wonderful and spiritual miraculous power is to violate the established and accustomed law of nature. Ibn Sina does not consider it to be impossible for the blessed ones. He mentions it in detail :

”و لعلك قد تبلغك عن العارفين اخبار تكاد تاتي بقلب العادة فتبادر الى التكذيب و ذلك مثل ما يقال ان عارفا استسقى للناس فسقوا و استشفى لهم فشفوا و ادعا عليهم فخسف بهم و زلزلوا و اهلكوا بوجه اخر او دعاهم فصرف عنهم الوباء و الموتان او السعير او الطوفان او خشع لبعضهم سبع او لم ينفر عنه طير او مثل ذانك مما لا ياخذ في طريق الممتنع الصريح فتوقف و لا تعجل فان لامثال هذه اسبابا في اسرار الطبيعة“²²

The great philosopher Ibn Miskawaih, discussing the gradual spiritual enlightenment achieved by the prophets, remarks that the prophets exell the philosophers who can progress only in the field of imagination and intellect and that they (the prophets) may know the things to come after hundred or even thousand years :

”و هذه رتبة واسعة العرض تتفاوت فيه درج الانبياء صلوات الله عليهم و منازلهم فربما ظهر لهم من الامور ظهورا بينا و بما كان فيه غموض فيلوح لهم ما يلوح و كان عليه مترا و من دونه حجابا و كذلك حال ما يروونه من الامور المستقبلية في عالمنا هذا من الفتن و الحروب و غير ها فانهم ربما راوا الشئ الذي يكون له الى مائة سنة فقط و ربما بلغ نظرهم الى الف سنة“²³

The great muslim theologian, Sheikh Ahmad Sarhindi, writes in one of his letters (maktoobat) about the credibility of miracle :

”فالحق في هذا المقام ما اتلو عليك انا انما جوزنا خرق العادة خاصة في حق النبي اعجازا وفي حق الولي كرامة مع كونه مفسطة لحصوله في كل عصر و تحققة في كل زمان حتى صار عادة مستمرة لا يمكن انكاره و ارتفع استبعاده و اما فيما وراء ذلك فالعادة باقية على حالتها الاصلية لا يرتفع استبعادهما ولا يتطرق اليها شبهة و لا يجوز فيها انخراق اصلا“²⁴

The great scholar, Shah Waliullah, establishes the credibility of miracles as follows :

”و بالجملة فيحدث هذه الحوادث فيجعلها الله تعالى معجزة لنبي من الانبياء بوجه من الوجوه مثل ان يخبر بحدوثها قبل ان تحدث او تكون موافقة لما انزل الله عليه من سنة المجازاة و نحو ذلك كما اهلك الله عادا و ثمودا لمعاصيهم المستوجبة للاهلاك فجعلها الله تعالى معجزة لهود و صالح عليه السلام“²⁵

Shah Waliullah, has discussed miracles and given their rational interpretations. But he regards his interpretations as an intellectual discussion and rationalistic approach to an event but he does not doubt its propriety :

”وقلت هذا القول ذكرته على سبيل الامكان والاحتمال والا فقدره الله تعالى تسع الكل والعلم عندالله“²⁶

Muhammad Yusuf Musa, citing the opinion of Ibn Rushd regarding prophethood and miracles, remarks :

”كان من الحق ان نقرر ان ابن رشد بقى امينا دائما و صادقا في نزعة العقلية و من الدلائل على هذا ان رايه في النبوة و المعجزات يتفق كما اشرنا الى ذلك فيما سبق مع راي ابن سينا الذي عرضناه من قبل“²⁷

Muhammad Yusuf Musa giving the views about miracles as held by Ibn Rushd says :

”ان المعجزة امر ممكن في نفسه يتفق العقل و القوانين الطبيعة. و ان ما ذكره ابن سينا من الاسباب التي تنشأ عنها ممكن و جائز و ان ليس كل ما يكون ممكنا في طبعه يقدر ان يفعله الانسان. بدليل الحس و المشاهدة و الواقع فيكون اتيان النبي بامر خارق ، اي معجزة ، ممكنا في نفسه و ان كان ممتنعا على الانسان“²⁸

He concludes :

”وليس يحتاج في ذلك ان نقرر ان الامور الممتنعة في العقل ممكنة في حق الانبياء“²⁹

Muhammad Yusuf Musa, explaining Ibn Rushd's opinion regarding miracles, remarks that even the ancient philosophers did not doubt the credibility of miracles :

”وقد رأى ابن رشد من الضرورى ان يؤكد. قبل الدخول فى صميم الموضوع امرين — ان الفلاسفة القدماء لم يتكلموا فى المعجزات لاعتبارهم اياها من اصول الشرائع التى لا يجب بحثها ويعاقب من يشكك فيها. وان المعجزة ليست امرا يمتنع عقلا ان يكون. بل هى ممكن فى نفسه لان له سببه. ولكنه يمتنع على الانسان العادى و يمكن لا نبياء. كما هو الامر فى القرآن معجزة رسولنا عليه الصلوة والسلام“³⁰۔

It will be very interesting to quote the great scholar of our time, Allama Shibli who has mentioned the opinion adopted by a conference of the scientists, in connection with the credibility of miracles :

۱۸۶۹ء میں بمقام لندن ایک بہت بڑی مجلس ان امور کی تحقیقات کے لیے منعقد ہوئی۔

اس مجلس کے ارکان یہ تھے :

سرجان لیک	ممبر پارلیمنٹ - صدر انجمن
پروفیسر ہکسلے	جو طبیعیات کا سب سے بڑا عالم تھا
لوئیس	فزیکل مائنس کا بہت بڑا عالم
الفرڈ ویلز	جو ڈارون کا ہم عصو اور مسئلہ ارتقاء میں برابر کا شریک تھا۔
مارگن	مجلس علوم ریاضیہ کا صدر انجمن
جان کوکس	
اور دیگر حضرات	

اٹھارہ مہینے تک یہ مجلس برابر تحقیقات کرتی رہی۔ رپورٹ کے بعض فقرے یہ ہیں :

”مجلس نے اپنی رائے کا مدار صرف ان تجربوں پر رکھا جو مجلس نے برای العین مشاہدہ کیے اور جن میں کسی قسم کا شک و شبہ نہیں ہو سکتا تھا۔ مجلس میں چار شخص ایسے ممبر تھے جو شروع میں اس قسم کے واقعات کے سخت منکر تھے اور سمجھتے تھے کہ یا تو ان واقعات میں فریب اور شعبدہ بازی سے کام لیا جاتا ہے یا خود انسان کے عصبی نظام کا اثر ہے لیکن نہایت دقیق اور مکرر تجربوں کے بعد ان کو یہ اقرار کرنا پڑا کہ یہ خرق عادت حقیقی اور واقعی ہے۔“³¹

MIRACLES—A MANIFESTATION OF THE POWER OF GOD

From the above discussion it is obvious that credibility of miracles is accepted by all the Muslim theologians and philosophers. As the miracles, performed by saintly persons in other religions they have been a great cause of confusion in their followers' creed. The followers thought that one who performs miracle becomes divine. It caused a great confusion and distorted their concept of miracle. As the Quranic concept of miracle tells that this power of miracles always manifests itself by Almighty God to prove the veracity of his noble servants, miracle has been believed absolutely to be a manifestation of the power of God and has been mentioned by almost all the theologians to avoid any misunderstanding in connection with the performers of miracles whether they are prophets or saints.

The great theologian al-Ghazzali remarks that the miracle happens with the grace of God and there remains no doubt about its credibility :

”وقد اتضح بهذا ان الفعل مهما علم انه فعل الله تعالى وانه خارج عن مقدور البشر واقترب بدعوى النبوة حصل العلم الضرورى بالصدق وكان الشك من حيث الشك فى انه مقدور البشرام لا فاما بعد معرفته كونه من فعل الله تعالى لا يبقى للشك مجال اصلا“^{31A}

The great scholar al-Razi argues :

”وهى ان كل من كان كذلك كان صادقا فالذى يدل عليه هو ان المعجزات لما اعجز الخلق عنها كان ذلك فعلا من افعال الله تعالى خلقه عقيب دعواه وخلق المعجزة عقيب الدعوى يدل على تصديق مدعى الرسالة“³²

The famous scholar Ibn Hazm, stresses the point that miracles are bestowed only by Allah :

”وفاعل هذه المعجزات هو الاول الذى احدث كل شئ ووجدناه هذه القوى قد اصبحت الله تعالى يدعون اليه و يذكرون انه تعالى“³³

The great theologian al-Iji tells :

”المذهب عندنا انه فعل الفاعل المختار يظهرها على يد من يريد تصديقه بمشية لما تعلق بالمشية من دعوى النبوة ممن ارسله الى الناس ليدعوهم الى ما ينجيهم و يسعدهم فى الدارين“³⁴

The best discussion on this point is cited by the celebrated theologian al-Baqillani. He opines that a true miracle is something over which God alone has power and that it cannot fall under the powers of creatures be they angels, men or jinn :

”اعلموا - و فقكم الله - ان المعجز لا يكون عندنا معجزا حتى يكون مما ينفرد الله عز وجل بالقدرة عليه ولا يصح دخوله تحت قدر الخلق من الملائكة و البشر والجن“³⁵

al Baqillani, further states that the miracles occur only by the power of God who simply empowers apostles to do those things and prevents others from doing so. Discussing this issue he concludes :

”الاعجاز انما هو فى اقدار الله سبحانه لهم على ما يقدرهم عليه من هذه الامور ومنع الغير منه و خرق العادة بتمكينهم من فعل كثير هذه الاجناس على وجه لم تجر العادة بالاقدار على مثله“³⁶

He stresses the fact that the miracle is only empowered by God alone and, therefore, it cannot be possible within the power of creatures :

”وكان المعجز هو ما ذكرنا - مما ينفرد الله عز وجل بالقدرة على ابداعه و يستحيل دخوله تحت قدر العباد“³⁷

He argues that if it had been possible for men to heal like the miracles of Jesus, then Plato, Socrates, Hippocrates and others who were best acquainted with medicine would have performed miracles. But they did not do so :

”فلو كان ابراء الاكمه والابرص من فعل العباد بحيلة - كان افلاطون و سقراط و بقراط
ومن انتهى اليه علم الطب من هؤلاء و تلامذتهم اعرف الناس بوجه الحيلة اعرضوا
عن ذلك“³⁸

CONCEPT OF MIRACLE (KARAMAT) ACCORDING TO MUTAZILITES

Belief in miracles of the prophets had been an admitted fact. But there is a very interesting discussion about the miracles of the saints. Almost all the Muslim theologians except Mutazilites and “ahl-al Zahir”, believe in the miracles of the saints (Karamat) along with their belief in the miracles of prophets (Mujizat). The Mutazilites say that the belief in the Karamat of the saints is not justified as it will confuse the issue of the miracles of the prophets. Abu Nasr al-Siraj al-Tusi, (d. 378 A.H.) answering the objection put forth by Mutazilite scholars, that ‘Karamat’ does not occur, mentions their argument as follows :

”قال اهل الظاهر - لا يجوز كون هذه الكرامات لغير الانبياء عليهم السلام لان الانبياء
مخصوصون بذلك و الايات و المعجزات و الكرامات واحدة و انما سميت معجزات لاجاز الخلق
عن الاتيان بمثلها. فمن اثبت من ذلك شيئا لغير الانبياء عليهم السلام فقد ساوى بينهم و لم
يفرق من الانبياء و بينهم“³⁹

Replying to their objections, he remarks :

”من انكر ذلك فانما انكرها احترازا من ان يقع وهن في معجزات الانبياء عليهم السلام -
و قد غلط قائل هذا القول لان بينهم و بين الانبياء عليهم السلام في ذلك فرقا من
جهات شتى“⁴⁰

He differentiates between “Mujiza” and “Karamat” and points out that the basic difference between them is that the prophet does not conceal his miracles but shows them to make the unbeliever believe while the saints generally conceal their “Karamat”.⁴¹

He established the credibility of “Karamat” from Kitab and Sunna and says :

”و الدليل على جواز ذلك. الكتاب و الاثر. قال الله تعالى“-

”وهزى اليك بجذع النخلة تساقط عليك رطبا جنيا و مریم لم تكن بنبية . . . و حديث
عمر رضی الله عنه انه قال في خطبته ”يا سارية الجبل“ فسمع صوته بالعسكر على باب
نهاوند“⁴²

He further enumerates names of so many companions of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) alongwith other saints of Ist century and says :

”وقد صرح عنهم ذلك عندهم وقد حدثوا بها. مثل ايوب السخيتياني وحماد بن زيد و سفيان الثوري وغيرهم من الائمة والثقات ولم ينكر ذلك واحد منهم. وهم ائمتنا في الدين و برواياتهم صرح عندنا علم الحدود و الاحكام و علم الحلال و الحرام فكيف يجوز ان نصدقهم في بعض ما يروون ولا لصدقهم في بعض ذلك“⁴³.

The great scholar, al-Ghazzali, discussing the credibility of Karamat says :
 ”و الحق ذلك جائز و انه يرجع الى خرق الله تعالى العادة بدناء انسان او عند حاجته و ذلك مما لا يستحيل في نفسه لانه ممكن ولا يثودي الى مجال اخر فانه لا يودي الى بطلان المعجزة“⁴⁴.

The best discussion in this connection is by the great scholar and mystic Abul Hasan Ali B. Uthman b. Ali al-Ghaznawi al-Jullabi al-Hujwiri (d. 465 A. H.) in his celebrated book, "the Kashf Al-Mahjub", the oldest Persian treatise on Sufism. Discussing the issue of miracles as conceived by Mutazilites, he remarks :

“The Mutazilites, however, deny special privileges and miracles, which constitute the essence of saintship ——— The Mutazilites also maintain that, if saintship involved miracles, all believers must have miracles vouchsafed to them, because they all share in faith and if they share in what is fundamental they must likewise share in what is derivative. They say, further that miracles may be vouchsafed both to believers and to infidels, e.g. when anyone is hungry or fatigued on a journey some person may appear in order to give him food or mount him on animal for riding. If it were possible, they add, for anyone to traverse a great distance in one night, the prophet must have been that man ; yet when he set out for Makkah, God said, “And they (the animals) carry your burdens to a land which ye would not have reached save with sore trouble to yourselves (Al-Quran, 16 : 7)”⁴⁵

Mentioning the objection of Mutazilites al-Hujwiri remarks :

“Your arguments are worthless ... (Referring to 17 : 1) Miracles are special, not general, but it would have been a general instance if all the companions had been miraculously conveyed to Makkah and this would have destroyed all the principles of faith in the unseen.”

He further adds :

“Faith is a general term, applicable to the righteous and the wicked alike, whereas saintship is special. The journey of the companions to Makkah falls under the former category, but inasmuch as the case of the Prophet was a special one, God conveyed him in one night from Makkah to Jerusalem and thence to a space of two-bow-lengths from the Divine presence and he returned ere the night was spent”⁴⁶.

Establishing the credibility of special privileges to the saints he criticizes the Mutazilites as follows :

“Again, to deny special privileges is manifestly unreasonable. As in a palace there are chamberlains, janitors, grooms, and viziers, who although they are equally the king’s servants, are not equal in rank, so all believers are equal in respect of their faith, but some are obedient, some wise, some pious, and some ignorant”.⁴⁷

Syed al-Hujwiri regards miracles of the saints to be Divine gifts :

“In fact, miracles (Karamat) and saintship are Divine gifts, not things acquired by Man, so that human actions (Kasb) cannot become the cause of Divine guidance”.⁴⁸

He opines that Karamat are, in reality, the very miracles of the prophet :

“Karamat of Moslems are an extraordinary miracle (Mujiza) of the prophet, for as his law is permanent so must his proof (hujjat) also be permanent. The saints are witness to the truth of the prophets’ mission and it is impossible that a miracle (Karamat) should be wrought by an unbeliever”.⁴⁹

He has narrated a very interesting story of the Karamat of Ibrahim Khawwas when a Christian monk became a Muslim. He has also referred to the various miracles of the saints mentioned in the Quran as Asaf b. Barkhiya, Mary, men of the cave⁵⁰ and has also mentioned the traditional story of the three persons involved in the cave⁵¹ and concludes :

“The reality of miracles having been established by logical argument, you must now become acquainted with the evidence of the Quran and the genuine Traditions of the prophet. Both Koran and Tradition proclaim the reality of miracles and extraordinary acts wrought by saints. To deny this is to deny the authority of the sacred texts”.⁵²

Like Syed al-Hujwiri, Allama al-Taftazani also regards the miracles of the saints to be the very miracles of the prophet. He quoting al-Nasafi argues as follows :

“Since the Mutazilites, who deny the graces of the Walis, deduced proof that the manifestation of acts which annul the customary way of things, were they permitted to Walis, would be confused with evidentiary miracles and the prophet in no way would be distinguished from the non-prophet, al-Nasafi alluded to the answer which is made to them by saying :

“*And such a thing is reckoned as that is to say, the manifestation of acts that annul the customary way on behalf of Wails (in general) or an individual Wali who is one of a certain people. An evidentiary miracle on behalf of the Messen-*

ger to one of whose people this act appears because it is evident from it that is from this Grace. That he is a Wali and he could never be a Wali unless he were right in his religion; and his religion is the confession by the tongue and assent by the heart. Of the message of the messenger/ accompanied by obedience to him with respect to his commands and prohibitions, so that even if the Wali claimed to be independent and not a follower, he would not be a Wali and the act would not be manifested at his hands".⁵³

The great scholar concludes with a vivid, explicit and a clear notion of Karmat as follows :

"The outcome is that something which annuls the customary way is an evidentiary miracle when in any way related to a Prophet, whether it appears on his behalf or on behalf of individuals of his people, but when related to a Wali it is a Grace because he is free of any claim to the prophetic office of the one on whose behalf it was manifested. The Prophet must know that he is a prophet, he must purpose to manifest those things that annul the customary way, and he must give absolute judgement as to the necessity of evidentiary miracles ; (all of which is) in contrast to the Wali".⁵⁴

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MUJIZA AND KARAMAT

Abu Nasr al-Siraj al-Tusi (d. 378 A. H.) points out that the people who reject⁵⁵ credibility of Karamat probably reject it on the ground that it will weaken the truth of Mujizat but he opines that there is much difference between the two. In his opinion the basic difference between the miracles of the prophets and the saints is that the first does not conceal them but shows them to make the unbeliever believe while the latter generally conceal their Karamat.⁵⁶ Qazi Ayaz has written a chapter on the Karamat of the Holy Prophet P.BUH. It is obvious that in his opinion Karamat and Mujiza are one and the same thing both being Divine gifts. Maulana Shahabuddin al-Khaffaji, in his commentary, explains the same as Mujiza is along with a challenge while Karmat is not :

"الكرامة اعم من المعجزة فان المعجزة تكون بعد دعوى النبوة مقارنة للتحدى بالفعل او بالقوة و الكرامة لا يشترط فيها ذلك ويكون للنبي وغيره من اولياء الله تعالى سبحانه وان غلب في الحرف جعل الكرامة للولي و المعجزة للنبي الا انها لا تختص بذلك على ما عرف وما كان منها قبل النبوة للنبي ليسي ارهاصا لانه تاسيس للنبوة و مقدمة لها".⁵⁷

Abdual Qadir (d. 429 A.H.) points out three basic differences between Mujiza and Karamat :

"ان الفرق بينهما من وجهين - احدهما تسمية ما يدل على صدق الانبياء معجزة و تسمية ما يظهر على الاولياء كرامة للتمييز بينهما".

”و الوجه الثانى ان صاحب المعجزة لا يكتفم بمعجزاته. بل يظهرها و يتحدى بها خصومه و يقول ان لم تصدقونى فعارضونى بمثلها. و صاحب الكرامة يجتهد فى كتمانها ولا يدعى فيها“⁵⁸.

”و فرق ثالث و هو ان صاحب المعجزة مامون التبدل معصوم عن الكفر و المعصية بعد ظهور المعجزة عليه و صاحب الكرامة لا يؤمن تبدل حاله فان بلعم ابن باعورا اوتى من هذا الباب ما لم يوت غيره ثم ختم له بالشقاء“⁵⁹.

Al-Hujwiri considers no difficulty in reconciling the two classes of miracles. As both of them establish the prophecy of the Prophet. However, he has clarified this difference as follows :

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Mujizat involvee publicity. | 1. Karamat needs secrecy. |
| 2. The former tries to influence others. | 2. The Karamat is peculiar to the person by whom it is performed. |
| 3. The doer of mujizat is quite sure that he has wrought an extraordinary miracle. | 3. The doer of Karamat cannot be sure whether he has really wrought a miracle or whether he is unconsciously deceived. |
| 4. He who performs Mujizat has authority over the law and in arranging it he denies or affirms, according as God commands him. | 4. He who performs Karamat has no choice but to resign himself (to God's will) and to accept the injunctions that are laid upon him, because the Karamat of a saint are never in any way incompatible with the law laid down by a prophet. ⁶⁰ |

The great scholar Allama al-Iji, regards the miracles of the prophet before his becoming prophet to be the Karamat : He referring to the miracles of Jesus on his birth and the miracles of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. before the declaration of his prophethood, remarks as follows :

”قلنا تلك الخوارق المتقدمة على الدعوى ليست بمعجزات انما هى كرامات و ظهورها على الاولياء جائز“⁶¹.

He further points out that the prophets, before the declaration of their prophethood are not lower in rank than saints, so they are fully capable of performing Karamat :

”و الانبياء قبل نبوتهم لا يقصرون عن درجة الاولياء فيجوز ظهورها عليهم ايضا و حينئذ تسمى ارهاصا اى تاسيسا للنبوته... و المنكرون للكرامات جعلوها معجزات لنبي اخر فى ذلك العصر و هو مردود لوجودها فى عصر لا نبي فيه“⁶².

Sheikh Ahmad Sarhindi seems to refer to the same argument as cited by al-Iji :

”واما كلام عيسى عليه السلام في المهد وتساقط الرطب الجنى عليه من النخلة اليابسة وشق بطن محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وغسل قلبه واطلال الغمامة وتسليم الحجر والمدر عليه وغيرها لما كانت متقدمة على دعوى النبوة فليست معجزات بل هي كرامات وتسمى حينئذ ارهاصا اي تاسيما للنبوة“⁶³

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MIRACLE & SORCERY

The theologians and doctors of Islam have gone deep to differentiate the miracle of the prophet from that of the saint or magician. As the miracles of the prophets and saints have the same motive, there is a delicate difference between the two, but because of the same resemblance with wonderful acts of magicians, they had to discuss it in detail. They agreed that the motive of such acts is quite different but difference is in its nature. So there is an interesting discussion about magic and sorcery whether they have any reality like evidentiary miracles or they are simply illusions. The question of investigation was naturally to arise because, being wonderful events, they resemble miracles and someone might confuse them with each other.

The great Imam, Abu Hanifa, differentiating between the miracles of the prophets and saints and the wonderful events performed by the magicians, remarks :

”واما التي تكون لا عدائه مثل ابليس وفرعون والدجال فما روى في الاخبار انه كان ويكون لهم لا نسميها ايات ولا كرامات ولكن نسميها قضاء حاجاتهم وذلك لان الله تعالى يقضى حاجات اعدائه استدراجا لهم وعقوبة لهم فيغترون به ويزدادون طغيانا وكفرا“⁶⁴

As to its reality and possibility he concludes :

”وذلك كله جائز ممكن“⁶⁵

Abul Muntaha, a commentator on the great work of Imam Abu Hanifa, explains as follows :

”ولما كان من المستبعد عند العقول القاصره قضاء حاجات اعدائه دفع الامام الاعظم ذلك وبين الحكمة فيه بقوله (وذلك لان الله . . .) فيستحقون بذلك عذابا مهينا قال الله تعالى ولا يحسن الذين كفروا انما نعلمي لهم خيرا لا نفسهم انما نعلمي لهم ليزدادوا اثما ولهم عذاب مهين“⁶⁶

On the reality or possibility of such wonderful events he comments :

(وذلك كله جائز ممكن) لا يستحيل في العقل وقوعه قال الله تعالى منستدرجهم من حيث لا يعلمون وقال رسول الله - اذا رايت الله تعالى يعطي العبد ما يحب وهو مقيم على معصية فانما ذلك منه استدراج“⁶⁷

The celebrated theologian, al-Nasafi differentiates miracles from other wonderful works done by various categories of people, he says :

”الناقض للمعادة اربعة معجزة للنبي وكرامة للمولى ومعونة للمعوام و استدراج للمتاله“⁶⁸

The best discussion on this issue is by the great scholar al-Baqillani. In his celebrated book 'Miracle and Magic', a treatise on the nature of the apologetic miracle and its differentiation from charisms, Trickery, Divination, magic and Spells, which was later edited and its summary rendered into English by Richard J. McCarthy, the great Imam al-Baqillani, mentioning various examples of tricks, tells that the miracle is quite distinguished from them⁶⁹. Citing his opinion on the reality of sorcery or magic, al-Baqillani, referring to the Quranic verses 7 : 11 : and 2 : 102, says :

”فاما السحر فالذى نذهب اليه ان له حقيقة عندنا⁷⁰ فكيف يمكن ان يقال ان السحر باطل لا حقيقة له“⁷¹

He, further, argues that sorcery has reality and it not only actually happens but also disturbs the person for whom it has been done. Referring to 2 : 102, he remarks :

”فهذا نص منه تعالى على ان الجسر صحيح و انه ضار للمسحور و ان لم يضر الا باذن الله“⁷²

The great scholar Ibn Hazm, criticizing the opinion cited by al-Baqillani refutes it :

”ورايت لمحمد ابن الطيب الباقلاني ان الساحر يمشى على الماء على الحقيقة و فى الهواء و يقلب الانسان حمارا على الحقيقة و ان كل هذا موجود من الصالحين على سبيل الكرامة و انه لا فرق بين ايات الانبياء و بين ما يظهر من الانسان الفاضل و من الساحر اصلا الا بالتحدى“⁷³

Explaining further that sorcery or magic has absolutely no reality he regards such events to be a sort of visionary impression Referring to the Quranic verse (حبالهم تسعى . . . انما صنعوا كيد ساحر) he argues as such :

”فاخبر تعالى ان عمل اولئك السحرة انما كان تخيلا لا حقيقة له . . . فاخبر تعالى انه كيد لا حقيقة له - دانهم كادوا عيون الناس اذا وهموه ان تلك الحبال و العصي تسعى“⁷⁴

He cites an example of trickery as to prove that it has no reality at all :

”كما يفعل العجائبي الذى يضرب بسكينة فى جسم انسان فيظن من راه ممن لا يدري حيلته ان السكين غاصت فى جسد المضروب و ليس كذلك“⁷⁵

It will be very proper here to note the opinion of al-Ashari himself. He admits the reality of magic. Discussing the beliefs and creed of sunnites he mentions :

”و يصدقون بان فى الدنيا سحرة و ان الساحر كافر كما قال الله (البقرة : ١٠٢) و ان السحر كائن موجود فى الدنيا“⁷⁶

Discussing "istidraj" in his "Discourse on the performance of miracles belonging to the evidentiary class by those who pretend to godship", the great scholar and mystic, Syed al-Hujwiri, refers to the power of performing such miracles by Pharaoh, Shaddad, Numrod, and Dajjal. He further remarks :

"The Shaykhs of this sect and all orthodox miracle muslims are agreed that an extraordinary act resembling a prophetic miracle (mujizat) may be performed by an unbeliever".⁷⁷

The great philosopher, Ibn Sina cites a principle to distinguish and differentiate the evidentiary miracles from magic and sorcery :

"والذى يقع له فى جبلة النفس ثم يكون خيرا رشيدا مزكيا لنفسه فهوذ و معجزة من الانبياء او كرامة من الاولياء تزيده تزكيتة فى هذا المعنى زيادة على مقتضى جبلة فيبلغ المبلغ الاقصى - والذى يقع له هذا ثم يكون شريرا او يستعمله فى الشرفهو الساحر الخبيث".⁷⁸

Ibn Miskawaih, the famous muslim philosopher, argues that a magician has a defective miraculous power and performs only perceptible acts :

"ثم صفة الكاهن فنقول ان صاحب هذه القوة اذا احسن بها من نفسه تحرك بالارادة ليكملها وهى فى نفسه ناقصة فيبرزها فى امور حسية و يبرزها فى علامات تجرى مجرى الفال و الزجر و طرق الحصى و ما اشبه ذلك و ربما استعان بالكلام الذى فيه تكاف من سجع".⁷⁹

The great scholar, Ibn Taimiyyah, citing various examples to differentiate between the saints and magicians, in his book, remarks that they can be differentiated easily as good and bad coins and so on :

"فرق بين حال اولياء الرحمن و حال اولياء الشيطان كما يفرق الصيرفى بين الدراهم الجيدة و الدرهم الزيف و كما يفرق من يعرف الخيل بين الفرس الجيد و الفرس الردى و كما يفرق من يعرف الفروشية بين الشجاع و الجبان و كما انه يجب الفرق بين النبى الصادق و بين النبى الكذاب فيفرق بين محمد الصادق الامين رسول رب العلمين و موسى و المسيح و غيرهم بين مسيلمة الكذاب و الامود العنسى و طليحة الاسدى و الحرث الدمشقى و غيرهم من الكذابين و كذلك يفرق بين اولياء الله المتقين و اولياء الشيطان الضالين".⁸⁰

Ibn Qayyim, the great scholar and disciple of Ibn Taimiyyah, regards that the following the dictates of Islam is the only sign to differentiate between the saints and magicians :

"فالولياء الرحمن المتلبسون بما يحب و ليهم الداعوان اليه المجاربون لمن خرج عنه و اولياء الشيطان المتلبسون بما يحبه و ليهم قولا و عملا يدعون اليه و يجاربون من نهاهم عنه فاذا رايت الرجل يحب السماع الشيطانى و موذن الشيطان و اخوان الشياطين و يدعو الى ما يحبه الشيطان من الشرك و البدع و الفجور علمت انه من اوليائه فان اشتبه عليك فاكشفه فى ثلاثة مواطن فى صلاته و محبته للسنة و اهلها و نفرته عنهم و دعوته الى الله و رسوله و تجريد التوحيد و المتابعة و تحكيم السنة فزنه بذلك لا تزنه بحال و لا كشف ولا خارق و لومشى على الماء و طارفى الهواء".⁸¹

The celebrated scholar, Sheikh Ahmad Sarhindi, opines about "istidrj" as follows :

”و كشفى بعضى از امور غيبى كه در وقت صفائى نفس كفار و اهل فسق رادست ميدهد استدرج است كه مقصود ازان خرابى و خسارت آن جماعه است“⁸²

Discussing the magic and other wonders, he remarks :

”واما السحره و نحوه فمن قبيل ترتيب الاسباب لحصول المسببات و ليس من الخوارق فى شئى على انه توهيم و تخييل و اراء حقيقه غير متحققه فى نفس الامر كسراب بقيعة يحمله الظمان ماء حتى اذا جاءه لم يجده شيئاً“⁸³

An evidentiary miracle has never been performed by a magician. The opinions of various scholars in connection with the reality of magic and sorcery have been quoted above. The agreed opinion, however, even by all the orthodox scholars who strongly believe in the reality of magic is that a magician can not perform an evidentiary miracle like the prophet. The great scholar al-Baqillani, who believes in the reality of magic, clarifies that a magician never performs a miracle like the miracles of the prophets :

”واعلموا - و فكمم الله - انه قد اتفق على انه ليس فى السحر ما يمكن ان يجى الميت و يقلب الجماد حيوانا - و ما يكون عنده ابراء الاكمة و الابرص و ما ترتفع عنده الجبال الراسيات و تطلع عنده الشمس من مغربها و ينشق القمر و يسج الحصى و يتكلم الذيب الى امثال هذا من آيات الرسل عليهم السلام . . . و نحوه فلق البحر و اخراج اليد بيضاء و الايات التسع و اخراج ناقة من صخرة و امثال هذا مما قد اجتمعت الامة و وقفت على انه لا يكون عند سحر ساحر“⁸⁴

The great theologian, al-Ghazzali, expresses the same opinion to distinguish the miracles of the prophets from extraordinary acts of magicians :

”فاما الشبهة الثانية و هو عدم تيمنير المعجزة عن السحر و التخيل فليس كذلك فان احدا من العقلاء لم يجوز انتهاء السحر الى احياء الموتى و قلب العصا ثعبانا و فلق القمر و شق البحر و ابراء الاكمة و الابرص و امثال ذلك“⁸⁵

The great scholar, Ibn Hazm, who criticizes and refutes the reality of magic and sorcery says :

”وانه لا يمكن وجود شئ من ذلك لصالح ولا لساحر ولا لاحد غير الانبياء عليهم الصلاة و السلام و الله تعالى قادر على اظهار الايات على ايدى الكذابين المدعين للنبوته لكنه تعالى لا يفعل كما لا يفعل ما لا يريد ان يفعله من مائر ما هو قادر عليه“⁸⁶

The great theologian, al-Iji, in his celebrated book, Kitab al-Mawakif, discussing the creed of sunnites, argues that though the wonderful acts of miracles are intellectually and rationally possible by magicians, practically they never happened :

”فان اظهار المعجز على يد الكاذب و ان كان ممكنا عقلا فمعلوم ان تفاوه عادة“⁸⁷

Syed Ali al-Hujwiri points out that though there seems to be difficulty to distinguish the true miracles from those performed by the imposters, actually it is not :..... “But though he (imposter) should perform a hundredfold amount of such extraordinary acts, no intelligent person would doubt the falsity of his claim—such things fall under the principle of Divine deception (istidraj)”.⁸⁸

He further clarifies the position by saying that an imposter can not perform such miracles and we conclude here this discussion with his decisive remarks :

“But no such act can be performed if there be any possibility of doubt or any difficulty in distinguishing the true claimant from the imposter.....In fact, miracles (Karamat) are divine gifts, not things acquired by Man, so that human actions (Kasb) cannot become the cause of Divine guidance”.⁸⁹

IS THERE ANY CONDITION FOR AN EVIDENTIARY MIRACLE

Some muslim theologians have cited conditions for an evidentiary miracle. The great scholar al-Baqillani opines that the conditions of a true miracle are that it is an action of God, violates and contradicts the custom of men and is accompanied by the prophets' challenge to men to produce its like and consequently any other then the prophet is prevented from manifesting the like. He remarks :

”ان من حق المعجزان لا يكون معجزا حتى يكون واقعا من فعل الله سبحانه و تعالى على حد خرق عادة البشر مع تعدى الرسول عليه السلام بالاتيان بمثله و تقرير مخالفه بتعذر مثله عليه“⁹⁰

Al-Baqillani, in his various books has pointed out the same idea. The theme is that qualities and properties of a prophetic miracle, as stated by al-Baqillani are as follows :

1. They must belong to the category of that over which God alone has power ; or they must be objects of His power and at the same time belong to the class of things over which creatures have power (in the sense already explained).
2. They must be things which violate and contradict the custom.
3. Any other than a prophet must be prevented from manifesting the like.
4. They must take place when the prophet challenges men to produce the like and claims them as a sign of his own prophethood.
5. That the miracles must belong to the objects of God's power”.⁹¹

Abdual Qadir (d. 429) enumerates below the conditions for an evidentiary miracle :

”و للمعجزة شروط - احدها ان تكون من فعل الله عزوجل او ما يجري مجرى فعله و ان لم يكن في نفسه فعلا - والشرط الثاني ان يكون ناقصا للعادة فيمن هو معجز له و حجة عليه والشرط الثالث ان يتعذر على المتعدي به فعل مثله في الجنس او على الوجه الذي وقع التجديده عليه - والشرط الرابع ان يكون مطابقا لدعوى من ظهرت عليه على وجه التصديق فاما ان شهرت بتكذيبه فهي خارجة من هذا الباب و الشرط الخامس ان لا يتاخر عن دعواه تاخرا ليعلم انه لا يتعلق بها - و الشرط السادس ان يكون ذلك في زمان التكليف كما بيناه قبل هذا“⁹²

According to the great scholar al-Iji and al-Taftazani seven stipulations have been laid down regarding the evidentiary miracle. It must :

- (1) be from Allah,
- (2) annul the customary way of things,
- (3) be impossible for those who contend with Allah's Messenger,
- (4) appear at the hands of him who claims the prophetic office,
- (5) be in accordance with that claim,
- (6) substantiate his veracity, and
- (7) not happen before the claim to the prophetic office is made”⁹³

Allama Shibli has repeated the same conditions for a true miracle as told by the Asharites :

١- خدا کا فعل ہو - ٢- خارق عادت ہو - ٣- اس کا معارضہ ناممکن ہو - ٤- مدعی نبوت سے ظاہر ہو - ٥- دعویٰ کے موافق ہو - ٦- نبی کا مکذب نہ ہو - ٧- دعویٰ پر مقدم نہ ہو⁹⁴

THE KINDS OF MIRACLE

The great scholar al-Razi, discussing the miracles of the Holy Prophet, P.B.U.H. divides them in two main categories : (1) Miracles perceptible to senses and (2) Intellectual Miracles. He further divides the perceptible miracles into three kinds as follows :

”و ضبط القول فيها ان نقول معجزاته صلى الله عليه وسلم قسمان حسية عقلية اما الحسية فثلاثة اقسام - احدها امور خارجة عن ذاته ثانيها امور في ذاته و ثالثها امور في صفاته“⁹⁵

Discussing further in detail these three kinds of miracles, he mentions the first kind as follows :

”اما القسم الاول و هو الاشياء الخارجة عن ذاته فهو كما نشق القمر . و اجتذاب الشجر و تسليم الحجر عليه و نبوع الماء من بين اصابعه و اشباع الخلق الكثير من الطعام القليل . و حنين الخشب و شكاية الناقة و شهادة الشاة المسمومة و اظلال السحاب قبل مبعثه و ما كان من حال ابي جهل و صغرتة حين اراد ان يضربها على راسه و ما كان من شاة ام معبد حين مسح يده على ضرعها“⁹⁶

The second kind of miracle, which were found in his person, according to al-Razi are as under :

”و اما القسم الثالى - و هو الاحوال العائده الى ذاته فهو مثل النور الذى كان ينتقل من اب الى اب الى ان خرج الى الدنيا و ما كان من الخاتم بين كتفيه و ما سوى هذا من خلقته و صورته التى هى بحكم الفراسة دالة على نبوته“-

Stating the third kind of perceptible miracles, al-Razi says :

”و اما القسم الثالث - و هو ما يتعلق بصفاته وهى كثيرة“-

al-Razi, mentioning the unprecedented beauties of his exceptional moral qualities concludes :

”انه عليه السلام مع انه كان فى كل واحدة من هذه الصفات و الاخلاق فى الغاية القصوى من الكمال كان مستجمعا لها باسرها فلم يتفق ذلك لا حد من الخلق فكان اجتماعها فى ذاته من اعظم المعجزات“⁹⁷.

al-Razi has further discussed six kinds of intellectual miracles of the Holy Prophet. P.B.U.H. In these six kinds of intellectual miracles his stress is on the point that the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. in spite of being illiterate, presented the Holy Quran, comprising the accurate accounts of the ancient prophets news of the unseen wisdom, law and so many prophecies. He concludes :

و اعلم ان معجزات النبى كثيرة و اكتفينا ههنا بهذا القدر فثبت بمجموع ما ذكرنا انه - ادعى الرسالة و ظهرت المعجزة على وفق دعواه“⁹⁸.

We see Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin al-Al-Murtaza al-Yamani, a scholar of eighth century Hijra, following the same argument as given by al-Razi :

”ان معجزاته عليه الصلوة والسلام قسمان - حسية و عقلية - اما الحسية فثلاثة اقسام احدها امور خارجة من ذاته و ثانياها امور فى ذاته و ثالثها امور فى صفاته“⁹⁹.

He, further, almost copies the line of argument of al-Razi. Here are given some of his quotations :

”اما القسم الاول - و هو الاشياء الخارجة عن ذاته فمثل انشقاق القمر . و طاعة الشجر فى المشى عليه و تسليم الحجر عليه و حنين الجذع اليه - و نبوع الماء من بين اصابعه و اشباع الخلق الكثير من الطعام القليل و شكاة الناقة و شهادة الشاة المشوية و اظلال السحاب قبل مبعثه.....“
”اما المعجزات العقلية :

١ - ظهر بين قبيلة ما كانوا من اهل العلم -

٢ - كان قبل اظهاره دعوى الرسالة غير باحث عن هذه الامور ولا مشغول بها..... ثم انه خاص فيها دفعة واحدة واتى بكلام عجز الاولون والآخرين عن معارضته -

- ۳- تحمل فی اداء الرسالة انواع المتاعب -
 ۴- كان مستجاب الدعوة -
 ۵- ورود البشارة به - فی التوراة و الانجيل -
 ۶- اخباره عن الغيوب و صدقه فی ذالك“¹⁰⁰

Allama Asghar Ali Roohi, illumining the necessity of perceptible miracles, says that for masses and common people they are necessary :

”عوام الناس حقائق و معارف كو بوجه قصور فهم يا ضعف فطرت سمجھنے سے مطلقا عاری ہوتے ہیں . اس لیے عقلی معجزات ان کے لیے ہرگز حجت نہیں ہو سکتے“¹⁰¹

WHETHER MIRACLE IS A PART OF THE PROPHETHOOD OR AN ITS ESSENTIAL CONDITION

The best discussion on this topic has been made by Allama Shibli in his famous book “al-Kalam”.

Quoting al-Ghazzali from his famous book “al-Munqiz min al-Dalal” he points out that the miracle should not be considered to be the fundamental of true faith :

”فمن ذالك الطريق فاطلب اليقين بالنبوة لا من قلب العصا ثعبانا و شق القمر“¹⁰²

Quoting the great scholar al-Razi, he argues that the miracles is not a condition of prophethood. He, referring to the exegesis of (لولا انزل عليه آية من ربه) made by al-Razi quotes him :

”وليس من شرط الرسالة الاية المعجزة..... ولهذا علم وجود رسل كشميت . ادريس و شعيب ولم تعلم لهم معجزة“¹⁰³

Quoting Shah Waliullah, he does not regard the miracle as a part of prophethood though they happen in general. From Hujjat Allah al-Baligha, he refers :

”فليست المعجزات لاستجابة الدعوات و نحو ذالك الا امورا خارجة عن اصل النبوة في الاكثر“¹⁰⁴

Quoting Imam Raghil Isfahani, from his book, Shibli points out the two categories of people who generally demand miracles :

”و ذالك يطلبه احد رجلين اما ناقص عن الفرق بين الكلام الالهي و بين البشر و اما ناقص و هو مع نقصه معاند“¹⁰⁵

Maulana Rum argues that the very appearance and voice of the prophet is in itself a miracle and just as the child who does not doubt his mother when she calls

it for a suck, or like a thirsty man when given water, does not ask the proof of its being water, the people who are inclined to accept the truth do not ask any miracle. He says :

در دل هر استی کز حق مزه است روئی و آواز پیمبر معجزه است

He further repeats the idea similar to that cited by Raghīb Isfahani, that the enemies demand miracles and that they do not take any lesson from these miracles and do not come to believe¹⁰⁶.

Maulana Asghar Ali Roohi, also does not see miracle to be a part of prophethood but only a support. He argues in a logical manner :

”نبی هر وقت وصف نبوت سے متصف ہوتا ہے۔ اگر معجزہ جزو نبوت ہوتا تو اسے بھی بالفعل ہر وقت موجود ہونا چاہئے۔ مگر ایسا نہیں ہوتا۔ نیز معجزہ دلیل سے اور دلیل مدلول کی ذات سے ایک علیحدہ حقیقت کا نام ہے۔“¹⁰⁷

Allama Shibli, after quoting various scholars has concluded that the miracle and prophethood are not interlinked :

”شارع نے... اس عالمگیر اور ازلی غلطی کو رفع کیا کہ نبوت اور معجزے میں تلازم ہے۔“¹⁰⁸

REAL MIRACLES—ETHICS AND MORALS

It is an established fact that the unblemished and excellent character of a prophet is the real miracle by which he attracts men to believe. Giving a detailed account of the morals and manners of the Holy Prophet, P.B.U.H. al-Ghazzali remarks :

”و ان ذالک کہ لا یتصور لکذاب و لا لمبس بل کانت شمائلہ و احوالہ شواہد قاطعہ بصدقہ حتی ان العربی القع کان یراہ فیقول۔ واللہ ما نذا وجہ کذاب فکان لیشہد لہ بالصدق بمجرد شمائلہ فکیف من شاہد اخلاقہ و مارس احوالہ فی جمیع مصادرہ و مواردہ۔“¹⁰⁹

He further giving a detailed account of the miracles of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. stresses the point that his real miracle was his resplendent character :

”فلولم یکن لہ الا ہذہ الاسور الظاہرہ لکان فیہ کفایۃ وقد ظہر من آیاتہ و معجزاتہ ما لا یستریب فیہ محصل فقد خرق اللہ العادۃ علی یدہ غیر مرۃ۔“¹¹⁰

In another book, (معارج القدس فی مدارج معرفۃ النفس), al-Ghazzali, has given a word-picture of the excellencies of the Prophet's noble character to prove that the beauties of character are the real miracles which attract the people to believe :

”و استحقاق من کمال ترکیب المزاج و حسن الصورة و تمام الاعتدال و طهارة النشو و التربة و طيب الاعراق و مكارم الاخلاق و السمات الصالح و الاناة و الوقار و لين الجالب و خفض الجناح و الرحمة و الرافة بالاولياء و الشدة و البأس على الاعداء و صدق الحديث و اداء الامانة و الصون عن جميع الرذائل و التهلل بانواع الفضائل و زكاء العرض عن جميع الدنیاات و العفو عن ظلمه و الاحسان الى من اساء اليه و صلة الرحم و حفظ الغيب و حسن الجوار و اعانة المظلوم و اغائة الملهوف و حب المعروف و بغض المنکر و غیر ذالک“۔¹¹¹

Ibn Miskawaih, the great philosopher, also regards the noble character of a prophet to be a sign of his prophethood. He remarks :

”اما النبى المرسل فانه يتميز عن الناس بخصال كثيرة احدها ان للمرسل من الفضائل ما لا يجتمع الا فيه و يتميز بها عن غيره ولا تكون مجتمعة فى سواه“۔¹¹²

Qazi Ayyaz has quoted the great poet of Arab and the companion of the Holy Prophet, P.B.U.H. Abdullah Ibn Rawaha, who says :

”لو لم تكن فيه آيات مبينة
لكان منظره ينبىك بالخبر“¹¹³

Allama Nanotvi, the great Indian scholar, has rightly pointed out :

”اصل نبوت تو ان دو باتوں کا مقتضى ہے کہ فہم سلیم و اخلاق حمیدہ اس قدر ہوں۔ رہے معجزات وہ بعد عطاء نبوت عطا کرتے ہیں۔ یہ نہیں ہوتا کہ جیسے اظہار معجزات کے امتحان میں نمبر اول پایا اس کو نبوت عطا کی۔ ورنہ ناکام رہا“۔¹¹⁴

Allama Shibli, quoting al-Raghib al-Isfahani, from his book, “Kitab al-Zareea” regards morals and manners of the prophet to be the second category of miracles. He concludes :

”انبياء کو دو قسم کے معجزے دیئے جاتے ہیں۔ پہلی قسم یہ ہے کہ وہ پاک نسب ہوتے ہیں۔ ان کے چہروں پر وہ نور ہوتا ہے جو دلوں کو فریفتہ کر لیتا ہے۔ ان کے اخلاق ایسے ہوتے ہیں۔ جو قلوب کو مسخر کر لیتے ہیں۔ ان کی تقریر ایسی ہوتی ہے جس سے سامع کو تشفی ہو جاتی ہے۔ و هذا الاحوال اذا حصلت لا يحتاج ذو البصيرة معها الى معجزة ولا يطلبها“۔¹¹⁵

Now the question arises that when there is no need of miracles, and the prophets, by their noble character, attract the people to believe, and that as Maulana Rum and Imam Rabbani, Sheikh Ahmad Sarhindi have pointed out that the enemies do not believe in spite of miracles, then what motive and purpose miracles serve ?

PURPOSE AND MOTIVE OF MIRACLES

The prophets or saints never come to perform miracles and show wonderful events and to attract the people and get material achievements. The basic and fundamental motive of miracle is to prove the veracity of the performer so as to strengthen the cause of preaching and make the unbeliever believe.

The great theologian al-Nasafi, illuming the purpose of miracles of saints, remarks :

”يجوز اظهار الكرامة من الولى للمسترشد ترغيبا له عليها و عوننا الى تحمل اعياء المجاهدة فى العبادات لا اعجابا و فخرا“¹¹⁶

Abu Nasr al-Siraj al-Tusi (d. 378) points out that one of the motives of the miracles is to strengthen the belief of the prophet or saints themselves.

”فالمعنى فى ذلك ان النفس لا تطمئن الا بروية العين لان من جبلتها الشك فقال ابراهيم عليه السلام - ارنى كيف تطمئن نفسى - فانى مومن بذلك و النفس لا تطمئن الا بروية العين“¹¹⁷

He, further, points out another motive :

”لا نهم يعطون المعجزة للاحتجاج بها فى الدعوة. والدلالة على الله تعالى و الاقرار بوحدانيته تعالى“¹¹⁸

Indicating another motive of the miracle, he, in a chapter, narrates so many Karamat of saints and concludes that they occurred only to strengthen the belief of the believers.¹¹⁹ Like al-Nasafi he has also mentioned that a saint should never perform a miracle only for vanity. Narrating a story, he has quoted the great mystic Junaid as follows :

”قال ابن عطا - سمعت ابا الحسين النووى يقول - كان فى نفس من هذه الكرامات شئى فاخذت قصبة من الصبيان و قمت بين زورقين ثم قلت - و عزتك لئن لم تخرج لى سمكة فيها ثلاثة ارطال فلاغرقن نفسى . قال فخرج لى سمكة فيها ثلاثة ارطال قال فبلغ ذلك الجنيد رحمه الله فقال - كان حكمه ان يخرج له افعى تلدغه يعنى انه لو لدغته حية كان انفع له فى دينه من ذلك لان فى ذلك فتنة و فى لدغ الحية تطهير و كفارة“¹²⁰

He quotes Sahl bin Abdullah, the great mystic, as saying that the real Karamat is the moral excellence :

”ذكر عند سهل بن عبدالله رحمه الله الكرامات فقال - و ما الكرامات شئى تنقضى لوقتها و لكن اكبر الكرامات ان تبدل خلقا مذموما من اخلاق نفسك بخلقى محمود“¹²¹

He quotes Abu Yazid saying that the Karamat is only to be considered when its performer follows Kitab and Sunnah firmly :

”قال ابو يزيد رحمه الله - لو ان رجلا بسط مصلاه على الماء و تربع فى الهواء فلا تغتروا به حتى تنظروا كيف تجدونه فى الامر و النهى“¹²²

The great scholar Ibn Hazm tells the purpose of miracles to be a sign of the prophetic office :

”ارسلهم الى الناس و يشهدون به تعالى فيشهد لهم بهذه المعجزات المحدثه منه تعالى فى عين رغبة هؤلاء والقيوم اليه فيها و ضراعتهم اليه فى تصديقهم بها (فعلمنا) علما ضروريا لا مجال للشك فيه انهم مبعوثون من قبله عزوجل و انهم صادقون فيما اخبروا به عنه و تعالى“¹²³

The great theologian, al-Baqillani, explaining the necessity and motive of prophetic miracle opines :

“The special characteristic of the prophet which necessitates the manifestation of prophetic miracle at his hand is in his claiming to have a mission from God. So some sign that appear at his hand which will enable those enjoined to acknowledge his veracity to distinguish between him and the false claimant to prophethood. Otherwise they would be unable either to effect the knowledge of that which is enjoined to them or to omit effecting it. And the only indication by which one can distinguish between the truthful and the lying claimant to prophethood is that afforded by miraculous signs”.¹²⁴

Discussing the motive of miracle (Karamat) Syed Ali al-Hujwiri remarks :

“A miracle is a token of saints’ veracity and it cannot be manifested to an imposter except as a sign that his pretensions are false. It is an extraordinary act, performed while he is still subject to the obligations of religion”.¹²⁵

He further points out that the real object of a prophet and a saint is to seek the union and grace of God :

“Do not you perceive that when the two worlds were displayed to the prophet on the night of the Ascension he paid no heed to anything? He was in “union” and one who is “united” does not behold “separation”. Hence, God said : “His gaze swerved not, nor did it stray”,¹²⁶

He conditions the miracles of saints :

“You must know that miracles may be vouchsafed to a saint so long he does not infringe the obligations of the religious law.”¹²⁷

The great scholar, al-Razi also regards the miracle to be an evidence and attestation to the Divine mission of the prophet :

”فكذلك هذه الافعال الخارقة للمعادات اذا حصلت عقيب الدعوى صارت دالة على قيام التصديق بذات من فعل المعجز“¹²⁸

Answering a question whether the motive and purpose of miracle might be something else besides this, he argues :

”قلنا لا نسلم . بل هو متعين للدلالة على حصول التصديق والدليل عليه ان موسى عليه السلام لما قال الهى ان كنت صادقا فى ادعاء الرسالة فاجعل هذا الجبل واقفا فى الهواء فوق رؤوسهم ثم ان القوم يشاهدون انهم كلما امنوا به تباعد الجبل عنهم و كلما هموا بتكذيبه قرب ان يسقط عليهم فعند هذا يعلم كل احد بالضرورة ان المقصود من هذا الاظلال تصديق المدعى فى ادعاء الرسالة“¹²⁹

Ibn Miskawaih (d. 421) discussing miracles notes that his contemporary theologians believe in the credibility of miracles and consider them to be signs of prophethood :

”و قد بينه المتكلمون في زماننا هذا على ما ذكرته فقالوا - انما يبعث الله عزوجل الى كل قوم نبى ياتيهم من جنس ما يدعون مع الفضل فيه و البراعة و التبريز بالمعجز الذي لا يطيقونه ولا في مننهم مثله ليكون ابهر لاجتتهم و اوكد لدلالاتهم و اجدر ان لا يقول الناس جئتنا بما لا نعرف منه شيئا ولو عرفنا منه شيئا لاتينا بعلمه فهذا المعنى الذي ذهب اليه المتكلمون“¹³⁰

Muhammad Yusuf Musa, illuming Ibn Sina's opinion on miracles remarks that believing in the credibility of miracles he regards attestation as its motive.

”و كذلك يرى انه لصالح الناس و العالم لا بد من وجود نبى . و ان يكون انسانا يتميز بالمعجزات ليصدقه الناس و يتبعوه“¹³¹

The great philosopher, Ibn Sina remarks that the first motive of a saint is "Irfan" and to serve Him".

”العارف يريد الحق الاول لا لشي غيره و لا يوثر شيئا على عرفانه و تعبه له فقط و لانه مستحق للعبادة و لا نهانسبة شريفة اليه“¹³²

Nasiruddin Tusi, commentator, of al-Isharat, explains this idea as follows :

”للعارف بالكمال الحقيقى حالتان بالقياس اليه احداهما لنفسه خاصة و هى محبة لذلك الكمال و الثانية لنفسه و بدنه جميعا و هى حر كته فى طلب القرية اليه و الشيخ عبر عن الاول بالارادة و عن الثانى بالتعب و ذكر ان ارادة العارف و تعبه يتعلقان بالحق الاول جل ذكره لذاته و لا يتعلقان بغيره لذات ذلك الغير بل ان تعلقا بغير الحق تعلقا لا جل الحق ايضا“¹³³

Ibn Rushd, clarifying the issue of miracle and the attitude of philosophers towards it, regards it to be one of the principles of faith :

“Therefore, we do not find that any of the ancient philosophers discusses miracles, although they were known and had appeared all over the world, for they are the principles on which religion is based and religion is the principle of the virtues”¹³⁴

Allama Shibli Numani, has mentioned an interesting instance regarding Ibn Sina to the effect that he at first rejected the credibility of miracles, but with his own experience he had to admit.¹³⁵ Ibn Sina says :

”و لكنها تجارب لعائبت طلبت اسبابها— فاذا اتضح..... و اطمانت النفس الى وجود تلك الاسباب و خضع الوهم فلم يعارض العقل فيما يربارباها منها..... ثم انى لواقتمصت جزئيات هذا الباب فيها شاهدناه و فيما حكاه من صدقناه لطلال الكلام“¹³⁶

This discussion shows that the miracles are proof and evidence of veracity and Divine grace and a saint, with his moral excellences, following Kitab and Sunna, alongwith these miracles attracts people to believe and follow the right path.

THE THEORY OF CAUSE AND EFFECT OF MIRACLES

Since all lay down as a condition of the apologetic miracle that it violates customs, one must know what this custom is and what its violation.

The great theologian al-Baqillani, the author of the celebrated book on the inimitability of the Holy Quran entitled (اعجاز القرآن)¹³⁷ discussing the miracle and accustomed law of nature, explains "custom" as such :

"العادة على الحقيقة انما هي تكرر علم العالم ووجوه الشئ المعتاد على طريقة واحدة اما بتجدد صفته وتكررها او ببقائه على حالة واحدة وهذا هو معنى وصف العادة بانها عادة"¹³⁸

"It means custom is the repetition of the knower's knowledge and of the modes of the customary thing in one and the same way, either by renewal and repetition of its quality, or by its remaining in the same state"

He further, explaining (الامر المعتاد) states :

"فالامر المعتاد هو الشئ المتكرر على وجه واحد والوصف اللازم والاعتیاد لذلك هو وجود المعتاد له ومشاهدته اياه وعلم به على طريقة واحدة. والمعود لذلك الشئ هو المكرر لفعله على وجه واحد والجاعل له على صفة واحدة والمعود للمفعل هو الواجد له على طريقة واحدة"¹³⁹

It means "The customary thing is the thing repeated in the same way, and the persistent quality. Being accustomed to a thing is the awareness of it on the part of the one accustomed to it and his seeing and knowing it in one and the same way. The one who makes the thing customary is the one who repeats doing it in the same way and who makes it to be of same quality. The one accustomed to the action is the one who is aware of it in one and the same way).

al-Baqillani illumines the various kinds of customs as follows :

1. That common to all men of all times ;
2. That peculiar to some men and not to others ;
3. That peculiar to the men of a certain time and not to others ;
4. That proper to angels and not to men ;
5. That proper to jinn and not to angels and men ;
6. Possibly there is a custom proper to men and not to others.

Mentioning various kinds of customs, he concludes :

"فلا يجب ان يكون ما خرق عادة الانس خارقا لعادة الجن ولا ان يكون ما نقص عادة الملائكة ناقضا لعادة الانس و الجن"¹⁴⁰

It means "So what violates the custom of men does not necessarily violate that of jinn and what is contrary to the custom of angels need not be contrary to that of men and jinn".

The conclusion and nett result of his discussion is as follows :

1. The miracles must belong to the category of that over which God alone has power ; or they must be objects of His power and at the same time belong to the class of things over which creatures have power (in the sense already explained).
2. They must be things which violate and contradict customs.
3. Any other than the prophet are unable to manifest the like.
4. They must take place when the prophet challenges men to produce the like and claims them as a sign of his own prophethood.
5. That the miracle must belong to the objects of God's power.¹⁴¹

Ibn Hazm (d. 456) the great theologian, opines that the miracles are a violation of the accustomed law of nature only for prophets :

”وذهب اهل الحق الى انه لا يقرب احد عينا ولا يحيل طبيعة الا الله عزوجل لا نبياؤه فقط سواء تحدوا بذلك اولم يتحدوا“¹⁴²

The great scholar, however, criticizes the opinion of al-Baqillani that the prophet should make any challenge for his miracle :

”ان اشتراط التحدى فى كون اية النبى اية دعوى كاذبة سخيفة لا دليل على صحتها لا عن قرآن ولا من سنة صحيحة ولا سقيمة ولا من اجماع ولا من قول صاحب ولا من حجة عقل ولا قال بهذا احد قط“¹⁴³

He, enumerating various miracles of the Holy Prophet, P.B.U.H. further, argues that there are only three miracles of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. for which the challenge has been made :

”و سائر معجزاته العظام لانه لم يتحد بذلك كله احدا ولا عمله الا بحضرة اهل اليقين من اصحابه رضى الله عنهم ولم يبق له اية حاشا القرآن ودعا اليهود الى تمنى الموت وشق القمر فقط“¹⁴⁴

The great scholar does not believe in the theory that there is an essential connection between cause and effect. His concept of causation is as follows :

”According to us the connexion between what is usually believed to be a cause and what is believed to be an effect is not a necessary connexion; each of two things has its own individuality and is not the other, and neither the affirmation nor the negation, neither the existence nor the nonexistence of the one is implied in the affirmation, negation, existence and nonexistence of the other“¹⁴⁵

al-Ghazzali opines that in reality, there is no other cause but God. He argues and cites an example :

“Suppose that a man blind from birth, whose eyes are veiled by a membrane and who has never heard people talk of the difference between night and day, has the membrane removed from his eye by day and sees visible things, he will surely think then that the actual perception in his eyes of the forms of visible things is caused by the opening of his eyelids, and that as long as his sight is sound and in function, the hindrance removed and the object in front of him visible, he will, without doubt, be able to see and he will never think that he will not see, till, at the moment when the sun sets and the air darkens, he will understand that it was the light of the sun which impressed the visible forms on his sight”.¹⁴⁶

There is an interesting and scholastic debate on the concept of causation between two great scholars al-Ghazzali and Ibn Rushd. Al-Ghazzali's opinion on causation has been mentioned just now. Ibn Rushd refutes the notion of causation as perceived by al-Ghazzali as such :

“To deny the existence of efficient causes which are observed in sensible thing is sophistry, and he who depends this doctrine either denies with his tongue what is present in his mind or is carried away by a sophistical doubt which occurs to him concerning this question. For he who denies this can no longer acknowledge that every act must have an agent. The question whether these causes by themselves are sufficient to perform the acts which proceed from them, or need an external cause for the perfection of their act, whether separate or not, is not self-evident and requires much investigation and research”.¹⁴⁷

Criticising the method or argument adopted by the theologians, Ibn Rushd adds :

“And if the theologians had doubts about the efficient causes which are perceived to cause each other, because there are also effects whose cause is not perceived, this is illogical. Those things whose causes are not perceived are still unknown and must be investigated, precisely because their causes are not perceived, and since everything whose causes are not perceived is still unknown by nature and must be investigated, it follows necessarily that what is not unknown has causes which are perceived. The man who reasons like the theologians does not distinguish between what is self evident and what is unknown, and everything Ghazzali says in this passage is sophistical”.¹⁴⁸

Ibn Rushd, establishing the reality and truth of causation rejects its refutation, He argues :

“Logic implies the existence of causes and effects, and knowledge of these effects can only be rendered perfect through knowledge of their causes. Denial of cause implies that nothing in this world can be really known and that what is supposed to be known is nothing but opinion that neither proof nor definition exist, and that the essential attributes which compose definitions are void. The man who denies the necessity of any item of knowledge must admit that even this, his own affirmation, is not necessary knowledge”.¹⁴⁹

al-Ghazzali, citing the example of the great miracle of the extinguishing of the fire for Abraham, refutes the concept of causation as such :

“If this is true, and we assume a fire that has the quality it has, and two similar pieces of cotton in the same contact with it, how can it be imagined that only one and not the other will be burned, as there is here no voluntary act? And from this point of view they deny that Abraham could fall into the fire and not be burned notwithstanding the fact that the fire remained fire, and they affirm that this could only be possible through abstracting the warmth from the fire (through which it would, however, cease to be fire) or through changing the essence of Abraham and making him a stone or something on which fire has no influence, and neither the one nor the other is possible”.¹⁵⁰

Ibn Rushd, answering the objection, put by al-Ghazzali, regards miracles to be amongst the principles of religion :

“As to the objection which Ghazzali ascribes to the philosophers over the miracle of Abraham, such things are only asserted by heretical Muslims. *The learned among the philosophers do not permit discussion or disputation about the principles of religion*, and he who does such a thing needs, according to them a severe lesson... .Of religious principles it must be said that they are divine things which surpass human understanding, but must be acknowledged although their causes are unknown”.¹⁵¹

Ibn Rushd, further, clarifies the issue of miracles and the attitude of philosophers towards it :

“Therefore, we do not find that any of the ancient philosophers discusses miracles, although they were known and had appeared all over the world, for they are the principles on which religion is based and religion is the principle of virtue ; nor did they discuss any of the things which are said to happen after death”.¹⁵²

The great scholar al-Ghazzali, mentioning physical justification of the miracles, further says :

“The denial of our opponents that it lies in God’s power to confer on the fire or to the body an attribute which prevents it from being burnt is like the denial of one who has not seen the talc and its effect : For strange and marvellous things are in the power of God, many of which we have not seen, and why should we deny their possibility, and regard them as impossible”.

He further adds :

“And also the bringing back to life of the dead and changing of a stick into a serpent are possible in the following way : matter can receive any form, and, therefore, earth and the other elements can be changed into a plant, and a plant, when an animal eats it, can be changed into blood, then blood can be changed into sperm, and then sperm can be thrown in the womb and take the character of an animal. This in the habitual course of nature, takes place over a long space of time, but why does our opponent declare it impossible that matter should pass through these different phases in a shorter period than is usual and when once a shorter period is allowed there is no limit to its being shorter and shorter, so that these potencies can always become quicker in their action and eventually arrive at the stage of being a miracle of the prophet”.¹⁵³

al-Ghazzali concludes :

“And the best method according to both you and us is to relate these things to God, either immediately or through the intermediation of the angels..... but such a fact only emanates from Him when necessity gives a preponderance to its existence and the good determines it, and the good only determines it when a prophet needs it to establish his prophetic office for the promulgation of the good”.¹⁵⁴

Ibn Rushd, criticizing the opinions of the theologians, says :

“For such people it follows as a consequence that neither intellect nor existents have a well-defined nature, and that the truth which exists in the intellect does not correspond to the existence of existing things. The theologians themselves are ashamed of such a theory, but if they held it, it would be more consistent with their point of view than the contradictions in which their opponents involve them on this point indeed they do not find anything but vague word”.¹⁵⁵

Muhammad Yusuf Musa, mentioning the difference of opinion between the philosophers and al-Ghazzali and indicating his standpoint on the concept of causation, remarks :

”عمل على التدليل على ان الارتباط بين يسمى مسببا وما يسمى مسبباً ليس ضرورياً على خلاف ما يرى الفلاسفة وهذا لتكون المعجزات النبوية ممكنة - و ذلك ببيان ان احتراق القطن - مثلاً اذا لامس النار لا يدل على ان الاحتراق هو من النار و بها حقيقة . بل لا يدل الا على حدوث الاحتراق عند الملامسة . اما السبب فهو الله الذي خلق الاحتراق عند الملامسة والذي يجوز ان يخلق ما يسمى مسبباً بدون ما يسمى مسبباً“¹⁵⁶

Muhammad Yusuf Musa, further explains :

”نشير الى ان اهتمام حجة السلام بهذه المسألة يرجع الى انه يترتب على القول بالسببية انكار المعجزات التي لا بد منها لاثبات النبوات . هذه المعجزات التي تقوم على الفاء ما يقال من الرابطة الضرورية بين المسبب و السبب . مثل قلب العصا ثعباناً و احياء الموتى و شق القمر“¹⁵⁷

Ibn Rushd, being a believer and faithful Muslim philosopher, argues and harmonizes the concept of causation and the credibility of miracle as such. Muhammad Yusuf Musa says :

”و بعد هذا لم ينس ابن رشد انه فيلسوف مومن . و لهذا تراه يثوكد لنا انه ما ينبغي ان يشك احد في ان الاسباب لا تكتفى بنفسها في ان تكون عنها مسبباتها . بل لا بد لها في هذا من (فاعل) من خارج . فعلة شرطاني فعلها بل في وجودها فضلاً عن فعلها - اما تحديد جوهر هذا الفعل بالذات هل هو الله تعالى في نفسه او كائن اخر وسط بينه و بين الموجودات الاخرى“¹⁵⁸

al-Ghazzali, himself, admits that everything has a peculiar characterisitic which becomes a cause for another to happen. But, however, he, like the other theologians, remarks :

”ان يلقي نبي في النار فلا يحترق كما حصل لسيدنا ابراهيم - و هذا يكون اما بتغيير صفة النار او صفة النبي و ذلك بان يحدث الله بنفسه او بواسطة ملك صفة في النار تجعل حرارتها لا تتعداها الى ان طرح فيها و اما بان يحدث في جسم هذا صفة تدفع اثر النار عنه“¹⁵⁹

Ibn Rushd admits that sometimes a thing happens against its real cause. Muhammad Yusuf Musa, explaining Ibn Rushd's opinion, says :

”يذكر (ابن رشد) ان الفلاسفة لا يبعد عندهم التسليم بان السبب قد يتخلف عما هو سببه عادة اذا وجد مانع خارجي يمنع من صدوره عنه كما اذا كانت هناك مادة اذا قارنت الجسم القابل للاحتراق بطبعه منعت ان توثر النار فيه“¹⁶⁰

Muhammad Yusuf Musa, here, differs from Ibn Rushd and opines that the standpoint of theologians, in this connection, is most appropaitte :

”ان هذا الوضع الذي يفترضه ابن رشد ليس هو ما يراه المتكلمون و ذلك بانه لم يدع احد ان سيدنا ابراهيم حين القى في النار كان جسده قد طلى اولا بمادة منعت النار من ان تفعل فعلها . بل القرآن صريح في ان الله هو الذي امر النار ان تكون برداً و سلاماً على ابراهيم معجزة له“¹⁶¹

Maulana Rum has explained the same idea as such :

بیشتر احوال بر سنت رود
سنت و عادت نہادہ با مزہ
اے گرفتار سبب بیرون سپر
گاہ قدرت خارق سنت شود
باز کردہ خرق عادت معجزہ
لیک عزل آن مسبب ظن سپر

A very clear and explicit notion of causation and miracles has been cited by Maulana Rum. The rationalist seek the cause of the miracle but they don't think that the will of God Almighty is the very cause which is not perceptible as has been indicated in these verses of the Holy Quran :

”انما امره اذا اراد شيئا ان يقول له كن فيكون“¹⁶²
”و ما كان لرسول ان ياتي باية الا باذن الله“¹⁶³

The great Muslim philosopher Ibn Sina is also of the opinion that there are causes in the miracles which are generally not perceptible by the people. His idea on miracles has been explained before. Here the relevant quotations are mentioned only :

— و اعتبر ذلك من مذاهب الطبيعة المشهورة¹⁶⁴
— فلقد تجد الى سببه سبيلا في اعتبارك مذاهب الطبيعة¹⁶⁵
— فان لذلك في مذاهب الطبيعة اسبابا معلومة¹⁶⁶
— فان لامثال هذه اسبابا في اسرار الطبيعة¹⁶⁷

Nasiruddin Tusi, commenting on and explaining the ideas of Ibn Sina, remarks that the causes of such things are known to the scholars who investigate :

”اقول لما فرغ عن بيان الايات الثلاث المشهورة التي تنسب الى العارفين وغيرهم من الاولياء اراد ان ينهه على اسباب سائر الافعال الموسومة بخوارق العادة فذكرها في هذا الفصل و ذكر اسبابها في الفصل الذي يتلوه و انما قال يكاد يتأتى بقلب العادة ولم يقل بقلب العادة لان تلك الافعال ليست عند من يقف على علمها الموجبة اياها بخارقه للعادة انما هي خارقة بالقياس الى من لا يعرف تلك العلل“¹⁶⁸

The great scholar, Shah Waliullah, also considers that the miracles are not against the established law of nature but there are some hidden causes for which it seems to violate the accustomed law :

”انما المعجزات والكرامات امور اسبابية غلب عليه السبوغ فعائيت سائر الامبايات“¹⁶⁹

The great scholar concludes as such :

”و الحق ان كل يسمى خرقا فانه من امور العادية - لكن لما كان اسبابها قليلة الوقوع لا يظهر الا قليلا - حيث كان العامة لا يتوقعونها سميت خوارق“¹⁷⁰

Maulana Ghulam Mustafa Qasimi¹⁷¹, commenting on the attitude towards miracles adopted by Shah Wali Allah, remarks :

”و في كل خارق يشير الى الاسباب المصنعية له . لان العالم عالم الاسباب ولا يخلو كل حادثة عن سبب ولو ضعيفا لا يدركه عقول العامة . فمعجزات الانبياء وان كانت بخارقة عن العادة وخالية عن السبب الظاهرو ولكنها لا تخلوا عن سبب خفي يعرفه الخواص من اهل العلم وذوى البصيرة“¹⁷²

HARMONIZATION BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

There is a general misunderstanding among the rationalists that there is no harmonization between Religion and Reason. They opine that there is a clash and contradiction between the two. As Religion, according their opinion, comprises a set of dogmas and superstitions. I think that this opinion has been developed amongst our educated people due to the deep impression of the West. We need not discuss this issue here as a thorough discussion has been made in Chapter IV, how Religion and Reason grappled with each other in the West specially in connection with miracles.

Islam is a Religion of Nature. It has clear notions and vivid concepts. So there is no clash in this natural Religion and Reason. We see our most rationalist category of Muslim philosophers harmonizing between them.

Muhammad Yusuf Musa, discussing the harmonization between Religion and Reason cited by the Muslim philosophers as al-Kindi, Ibn Miskwaih and Ibn Sina acknowledges the contributions made in this connection by al-Farabi. al-Farabi strongly believes in miracles and regards them in the fundamental beliefs :

”جعل الكلى من الوهى و العقل مكانا بجانب الاخر و ذلك بالتسليم بالنبوة و المعجزات و العقائد الدينية الكلامية السمعيه . مع تفسير كل ذلك عقليا“¹⁷³

He further, cites the opinion of al-Farabi believing formidably in the possibility and credibility of miracles, upto the extent that a prophet is aware of things in “Loh-Mahfooz”

”و فيما يختص بالمعجزات التى يتقدم بها النبى دليلا على صحة رسالته . نرى ايضا ان لها عند الفارابى تفسيرها العقلى . و ذلك متى عرفنا . كما يقول . ان النبوة بمختصة بقوى قدسية يذ عن لها عالم الخلق الاكبر . كما يذ عن لروح الواحد منا عالم الخلق الاصغر . فتأتى بمعجزات خارجة عن الجبلة و العادات . ولا يمنعها شى من معرفة ما فى اللوح المحفوظ“¹⁷⁴

Muhammad Yusuf Musa remarks that Ibn Sina followed the mode of thinking of his teacher al-Farabi in connection with the relation of Reason and Shariah :

”فقد خصص بضع صفحات من كل من هذين الكتابين للغرض الذى عمل شيخه الفارابى . ولم يتاثر به فقط فى العمل لهذا الغرض . بل كذلك فى الطريق الذى رسمه و فى الخطة التى اتبعها فى معاولته . نعى تقريبا كل من الفلسفة و الدين للاخر و تفسير عقائد الدين و شعائره تفسيراً يرضاه العقل ولا ينهى به عن الشريعة“¹⁷⁵

Discussing the very issue of the credibility of prophethood, he cites the opinion of Ibn Sina in this connection as also the credibility of miracles :

”انه يرى ان النبوة هي الفيض والالهام عن العقل الفعال . وان النبي هو من يقبل هذا الفيض بلا واسطه . و كذلك يرى انه لصالح الناس و العالم لا بد من وجود نبي . و ان يكون انسانا يتميز بالمعجزات ليصدقه الناس و يتبعوه“¹⁷⁶

It is very interesting to note what Allama Shibli¹⁷⁷ says that Ibn Sina, in the first instance, rejected miracles but with his own experience, observing himself various miracles of saints, he not only admitted the fact but also strongly argued for it :

”و لكنها تجارب لما ثبتت طابت اسبابها—فاذا اتضع و اطمانت النفس الى وجود تلك الاسباب و خضع الوهم فلم يعارض العقل فيما يربا رباه منها ثم انى لواقتهصمت جزئيات هذا الباب فيما شاهدناه و فيما حكاه من صدقناه لطال الكلام“¹⁷⁸

Discussing the philosophical concept of the prophethood cited by Abdullah bin Muhammad bin al-Sayyid al-Batalyosi (444-521). Muhammad Yusuf Musa remarks the supermacy of revelation and its divine origin on philosophy :

”نفهم انه يذعب الى علو مرتبة النبي عن مرتبة الفيلسوف . بل انه ليؤكد بصراحة ان النفس النبوية اشرف النفوس . و انه لا يتفق . ان توجد الا في ذوى الفطر الكاملة—كما يؤكد بعد هذا ان النبوة الهام لا اکتساب“¹⁷⁹

al-Batalyosi has harmonized between Religion (Shariah) and Reason :

”و هكذا ترى البطايوسى يعمل للتوفيق بين الشريعة و الفلسفة“¹⁸⁰

Ibn Miskwaih, (d. 421 A.H.), the great philosopher, opines that a prophet with his pious character is on such a high rank of intellect that he can even know things to come after one thousand years.¹⁸¹ Citing the opinions of his contemporary theologians about the miraculous power bestowed to the prophets, he says :

”و قد بينه المتكلمون فى زماننا هذا على ما ذكرته فقالوا—انما يبعث الله عزوجل الى كل قوم نبى ياتيهم من جنس ما يدعون مع الفضل فيه و البراعة و التبريز بالمعجز الذى لا يطيقونه ولا فى مننهم مثله ليكون ابهر ليجتهدهم و او كد لدلالاتهم و اجدران لا يقول الناس جئتنا بما لا نعرف منه شيئا ولو عرفنا منه شيئا لا تينا بمثله فهذا المعنى الذى ذهب اليه المتكلمون“¹⁸²

Muhammad Yusuf Musa, discussing the harmonization between Religion and Reason as told by Ibn Miskwaih, gives his opinion that a philosopher, in comparison to the common people, readily accepts the truth brought by the prophet :

”كان الفيلسوف اسرع من غيره لتصديق ما ياتى به النبي و قبوله . و ذلك لانه جاء بما لا ينكره عقله . و الناس فى حاجة الى الانبياء لمعرفة الاعمال النافعة التى بها تكون سعادة الانسان . و ان كان معرفة صحة ما دعوا اليه بالنظر الصحيح تكون من جهة الحكماء“¹⁸³

Ibn Maimoon, the great muslim philosopher, also observes that the prophet is at such a stage of dignified chastity that he is capable of knowing unseen things which philosophers can not do :

”و كذا لك يجب ان فعلم ان الانبياء الحقيقين لهم بلاريب الادراكات و المعرفة العقلية النظرية التي لا يمكن ان يصل الى مثلها ولا الى اسبابها المفكرون غير الانبياء الذين يعتمدون على القوة النظرية وحدها و حقا ان الوحي الذي يفيض على القوة المتخيلة للنبي متى وصلت الى الكمال . يجعله قادرا على التنبوء بالمستقبل و معرفة الامور الغيبة كما لو كان يدركها بحواسه“¹⁸⁴

Muhammad Yusuf Musa, has discussed the ideas of Ibn Maimoon regarding the nature and supermacy of prophethood because of which a prophet performs miraculous power and knows unseen things. Ibn Maimoons' opinion is as follows :

”ان النبوة هي في الحقيقة فيض من الله بواسطة العقل الفعال على القوة العاقلة اولا . ثم على القوة التخيلة ثانيا . وهي اعلى درجة و اكمل رتبة من الكمال يستطيع ان يصل اليها انسان و يجب ان يكون هذا الانسان قد ملك العلم و الحكمة بدرجة ينتقل منها من القوة الى الفعل و ان يكون له العقل الكامل و ان يكون تفكيره و رغباته قد تخلصت من الاماني و الاطماع التافهة الباطلة“¹⁸⁵

al-Ghazzali, like Ibn Maimoon and other philosophers has remarked that a prophet is one who reaches the climax of intellect by his pious character and consequently can see unseen things. He has argued as such :

”ان النبي انسان بلغت قوته المتخيلة الفاية من القوة و لم تستغرقها الحواس . فاستطاعت ان تطلع في اليقظة و النوم على اللوح المحفوظ . و انطبعت فيها صور الجزئيات الكائنة في المستقبل و يكون ذلك معجزة للنبي . كما بلغت قوة العاقلة النظرية الكمال ايضا . فصار قوى الحدس بمعنى سرعة الانتقال من معلوم الى اخر من غير حاجة الى تعلم بل يكون كأنه متعلم من نفسه و يعتبر هذا معجزة ايضا و لكن من نوع اخر“¹⁸⁶

al-Ghazzali has described this gradual progress of spiritual enlightenment of a prophet by which he is endowed with miraculous power :

”و كذا لك اخيرا . بلغت قوته النفسية و العملية حدا تتاثر به الامور الطبيعية و تتسخر له فكما ان نفس الانسان توثر في جسمه و توثر في نفوس غيره اذا كانت هذه القوة النفسية العملية قوية فيه . كذا لك اذا بلغت هذه القوة درجة الكمال صار من الممكن ان تخضع لها امور الطبيعة . و يكون ذلك من النبي معجزة له من ضرب ثالث“¹⁸⁷

A great contribution in this connection has been made by the great philosopher Ibn Rushd. Muhammad Yusuf Musa, under the caption “Relation between Reason and Revelation in the opinion of Ibn Rushd” says :

”ان العناية بانشاء علاقة طيبة بين الوحي والعقل وتثبيت هذه العلاقة على اسم متينه لما يجب ان يعمل له الفيلسوف المتدين كما قلنا من قبل . على انه فضلا عن هذا قد جد سبب آخر بالنسبة لابن رشد يجعله . بعد فلاسفة المشرق و لاخرين الذين سبقوه يبذل غاية الجهد في هذه السبيل“¹⁸⁸

Tracing the background of this great contribution he says that al-Ghazzali's "Tahafut al-Falasifa" induced Ibn Rushd to prove the relation between Reason and Revelation so he produced three books :

”و خصص للغاية التي اراد الوصول اليها كتابه - فصل المقال فيما بين الحكمة و الشريعة من الاتصال و ”الكشف عن مناهج الادلة في عقائد الملة“ . ذلك فضلا عما خصصه لها ايضا من كتابه ”تهافت التهافت“ في مناسبات مختلفة و مواضع عدة“¹⁸⁹

Ibn Rushd's conclusion is this that Philosophy and Religion are two foster-sisters :

”وقد انتهى ابن رشد من ذلك كله الى ان الحكمة و الشريعة . او الفلسفة و الدين اختان ارتضعتا لباينا واحدا و انهما يتعاونان في امعاد البشر“¹⁹⁰

The first and foremost point which is to be borne in mind is that Shariah itself regards Reason as obligatory in 59 : 2 to deduce unknown from the known, and it is the same practice as is followed by a philosopher who calls it analogy or logical reason¹⁹¹.

Ibn Tufail (d. 581 A.H.) who is contemporary of Ibn Rushd has also tried to harmonize between Reason and Shariah :

”نرى المراكشي و المقرئ يصنعان ابن طفيل بالاجتهاد في التوفيق بين الحكمة و الشريعة“¹⁹²

This attempt is made by almost all the philosophers of Andulus at top priority :

”لا عجب اذن . ان راينا الفلاسفة في المغرب يعنون . قبل كل شئ . بالعمل على التوفيق بين الاملام و الفلسفة و يخصص الواحد منهم بعض مولفاته لهذا الغرض“¹⁹³

It is an established fact that all the Muslim philosophers to face the challenge of the time, contributed something to harmonize between Religion and Reason. We conclude this discussion with the remarks of Muhammad Yusuf Musa :

”وهكذا ينتهي ابن ميعون . و كذلك الغزالي من قبل . من بيان نظرية النبوة بصفة عامة لدى فلاسفة الاملام و الى ان هؤلاء و بالاخص الفارابي و ابن سينا . فسروا النبوة تفسيراً نفسياً عقلياً رغبة منهم في التوفيق بين الوحي و العقل و حرصوا لهذا على جعل النبي اعلى منزلة من الفيلسوف . مادام هو نبيا و فيلسوفا معا بكمال قوته المتخيلة و قوة النظرية..... و اجماعهم على ان اعلى ما يمكن ان يصل اليه بشر هو درجة النبوة“¹⁹⁴

FOOT NOTES

1. Al-Baqillani, Kitab al Bayan, Beriut, 1958, p. 9.
2. Abu Hanifa, Sharh al-Fiqh al-Akbar, Hyderabad-Daccan, 1321 A.H., pp. 30-31 (annotated by Abul-Muntaha).
3. ibid., pp. 30-31.
4. al-Ghazzali. Kitab al-Iqtisad fil Itiqad, Egypt, n.d., p. 91.
5. ibid., p. 90.
6. Abdul Qadir, Kitab Usul al-Din, Istanbul, 1928, p. 180.
7. al-Baqillani, Kitab al-Tamheed, Cairo, 1947, p. 114.
8. Ibn Hazm, Kitab al-Fisal fil Milal wal Ahwa al-Nahal, Egypt, 1317 A.H., vol. I, p. 71.
9. al-Nasafi, Aqaid, London. 1843, pp. 3-4.
10. Macdonald, Development, New York, 1926, p. 312.
11. al-Nasafi, Pillar of the Creed of the Sunnites, London, 1843, p. 16.
12. ibid.
13. ibid.
14. al-Taftazani, A commentary on the Creed of Islam, Columbia University Press, New, York, 1950. p. 129.
15. ibid., p. 129.
16. i bid., p. 139.
17. al-Razi, Kitab al-Arbaeen fi Usul al Din, Hyderabad Daccan, 1353. A.H., p. 385.
18. ibid., p. 3.
19. Ibn Sina, Kitab al-Isharat wal-Tanbihat, Leyde, 1892, p. 207. Cf. Egypt ed.. 1960, vol. III p. 853.
20. ibid., p. 208. cf. Egypt ed., p. 858.
21. ibid., p. 209, Cf. Fgypt ed., p. 861.
22. ibid., p. 219, Cf. Egypt ed., p. 892.
23. Ibn Miskwaih, Al-Fauz al-Asghar, Egypt, 1325, pp. 94-95.
24. Sheikh Ahmad Sarhindi, Ithbat al-Nu buwwah, Hyderabad, 1383, A.H., p. 17.
25. Shah Waliullah, Tawil al-Ahadis, Hyderabad, 1966, p. 101.
26. ibid., p., 104.
27. Muhammad Yusuf Musa, Bain al Din wal Falsafa, Egypt, 1959, p. 107.
28. ibid, p. 107. cf. also Tahafut at-Tahafut, p. 515.
29. ibid.
30. ibid., p. 217. cf. also Tahafut al-Tahafut, pp. 514, 515, 527.
31. Shibli, al-Kalam, Lahore, 1952. vol. III, p. 129.

- 31A. al-Ghazzali, Kitab al-Iqtisad fi al-Itiqad. Egypt, N.D., p. 90.
32. al-Razi, Kitab al Arbaeen, p. 316.
33. Ibn Hazm, Kitab al-Fisal fil Milal wal Ahwa al-Nahal, Egypt, 1317 A.H., vol. I, p. 74.
34. al-Iji, Kitab al Mawaqif, vol. 8, p. 227.
35. al-Baqillani, Kitab al-Bayan, Beyrouth, 1958, p. 8.
36. al-Baqillani, ibid., p. 35.
37. al-Baqillani, ibid., p. 58. cf. also p 73.
38. ibid., p. 60.
39. al-Tusi, Kitab al-Luma, Egypt, 1960, p. 393.
40. ibid.
41. ibid.
42. ibid.
43. ibid., p. 398.
44. al-Ghazzali, Kitab al-Iqtisad, pp. 90-91.
45. al-Hujwiri, Kashf al-Muhjub, Eng. trans. by R.A. Nicholson, London, 1967, p. 215.
46. ibid., p. 215-216.
47. ibid., p. 216.
48. ibid., p. 225.
49. ibid., p. 222.
50. ibid., p. 231.
51. ibid., p. 232.
52. ibid., p. 230.
53. al-Taftazani, A commentary on the Creed of Islam, Eng. trans., by Earl Egdar Elder, New York, 1960 p. 140.
54. ibid., p. 140.
55. Cf. Ibn Hazm who concludes that the miracles are manifested only for the prophets:
 "فصح ان المعجزات اذا هي آيات لا تكون لساحر ولا لاحد ليس نبيا"
 (Kitab al-Fisal, vol. V, p. 8).
56. Kitab al-Luma, Egyqt, 1960, p. 393.
57. Nasim al-Riyaz fi Sharh al-Qazi Ayaz, Egypt, 1326 A.H., vol. III. p. 131.
58. Cf. also al-Hujwiri, Kashf al-Mahjoob, Eng. trans. p. 221. cf. also p. 224. "if he (Wali) takes pains to obtain publicity he is led astray by self-conceit".
59. Abdul Qadir, Kitab Usul al-Din, Istanbul, 1928, p. 175.
60. al-Hujwiri, Kashf al-Mahjoob, p. 221.
61. al-Iji, Kitab al-Mawaqif, vol. 8, p. 226.

62. *ibid.*, p. 226.
63. Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, *Ithbat al-Nubuwwah*, Hyderabad, 1383, A.H., p. 13.
64. Abu Hanifa, *Sharh al-Figh al-Akbar*, Hyderabad Daccan' 1321 A.H., pp. 30-31.
65. *ibid.*, p. 32.
66. *ibid.*, pp. 31-32.
67. *ibid.*, p. 32.
68. *al-Nasafi, al-Umda*, p. 18.
69. *al-Baqillani, Kitab al-Bayan*, Beyrouth, 1958, pp. 74.76.
70. *ibid.*, p. 77.
71. *ibid.*, p. 79.
72. *ibid.*, p. 79. cf. also pp. 80 & 84. Cf. Shibli criticizing the opinion of Asharities that they opine that a magician can fly in the air and convert a man into donkey and a donkey into man with the power of his magic. He has quoted *al-Razi* interpreting the event of Harut and Marut to regard it possible while Shibli agrees with Ibn Hazm's opinion (*Al-Kalam*, Lahore, 1952, vol. II, p. 75).
73. Ibn Hazm, *Kitab al-Fisal fil Milal wal Ahwa al-Nahl*, Egypt, 1322 A.H., v. 5, p. 2.
74. *ibid.*, pp. 5 & 6.
75. *ibid.*, p. 6.
76. *Al-Ashari, Maqalat al-Islamiyyin*, Istanbul, 1928, p. 282.
77. *al Hujwiri, Kashf al-Mahjub*, Eng. trans., p. 224.
78. Ibn Sina, *al-Isharat wal-Tanbihat*, Egypt, vol, III, pp. 898-899. cf. interesting remarks by the orientalisists: "The fact of these all orthodox Islam (miracles), admits even so philosophical an historian as Ibn Khaldun and a peripatetic philosopher like Ibn Sina". (*Shorter Ency. of Islam*, art. Karama").
79. Ibn Miskwaih, *Al-Fauz al-Asghar*, Egypt, 1325, p. 103.
80. Ibn Taimiyyah, *al-Furqan bain Auliya al-Rahman wa-Auliya al-Shaitan*, Lahore, 1321 A.H., p. 33.
81. Ibn-i-Qayyim, *Kitabal-Ruh*, Hyderabad Deccan, 1318 A.H., p. 425.
82. *Maktoobat*, letter No. 266, p. 119.
83. Imam Rabbani, *Ithbat al-Nubuwwah*, ed. Ghulam Mustafa Khan, Hyderabad, 138 A.H., p. 18.
84. *al-Baqillani, Kitab al-Bayan*, p. 91.
85. *Al-Ghazzali, Kitab al-Iqtisad fil Itiqad*, Egypt, n.d., p. 89.
86. Ibn Hazm, *Kitab al-Fisal*, vol. v. p. 2.
87. *Al-Iji, Kitab al-Mawakif*, vol. 8. p. 229.
88. *al-Hujwiri, Kashf al-Mahjoob*, Eng. trans. p., 224.

89. *ibid.*, p. 225.
90. al-Baqillani, *Kitab, al-Bayan*, p. 94.
91. *ibid.*, pp. 45-46.
92. Abdul Qadir, *Kitab Usul al-Din*, Istanbul, 1928, vol. I, p. 170.
93. Taftazani, *A commentary on the Creed of Islam*, Eng. trans., New York, 1950, p. 21.
94. Shibli, *al-Kalam*, vol. II, p. 71.
95. al-Razi, *Kitab al-Arbaeen fi Usul-al-Din*, Hyderabad Deccan, 1353 A.H., p. 309.
96. *ibid.*, 309.
97. *ibid.*, p. 310.
98. *ibid.*, p. 316.
99. al-Yamani, *Isar al-Haq Ala al-Khalq*, Cairo, 1318 A.H., p. 79.
100. *ibid.*, pp. 80-84.
101. Roohi, *Ma fil Islam*, p. 341.
102. Shibli, *Al-Kalam*, p. 94. cf. also *al-Munqiz*.
103. *ibid.*, pp. 93, 94.
104. *ibid.*, p. 94.
105. *ibid.*, p. 96.
106. Cf. Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, *Maktoobat*.
107. Roohi, *Ma fil Islam*, p. 330.
108. Shibli, *Al-Kalam*, p. 92.
109. Al-Ghazzali, *Ihya-Ulum al-Din*, vol. II, p. 384.
110. *ibid.*
111. al-Ghazzali, *Maarij al-Qudus*, Egypt, 1927, pp. 143-144.
112. Ibn Miskwaih, *Al-Fauz al-Asghar*, Egypt, 1325, p. 104. cf. also al-Razi, *Kitab al-Arbaeen*, Hyderabad Deccan, p. 310.
113. Qazi Ayaz, *Nasim al-Riaz*, Egypt, 1326 A.H., vol. II, p. 449.
114. Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi, *Hujjat al-Islam*, Deoband, p. 31.
115. Shibli, *al-Kalam*, p. 112.
116. al-Nasafi, *al-Umda*, p. 18.
117. al-Tusi, *Kitab al-Luma*, p. 393.
118. *ibid.*, p. 395.
119. *ibid.*, p. 404.
120. *ibid.*, p. 403.
121. *ibid.*, p. 400.

122. *ibid.*, p. 400.
123. Ibn Hazm, *Kitab al-Fisal*, vol. I, p. 74.
124. al-Baqillani, *Kitab al-Bayan*, Summary by Richard J. McCorthy, Beyrouth, 1958, p. 17.
125. al-Hujwiri, *Kashfal-Mahjoob*, p. 218.
126. *ibid.*, p. 259.
127. *ibid.*, p. 218.
128. al-Razi, *Kitub al-Arabeen*, p. 323.
129. *ibid.*,
130. Ibn Miskwaih, *Al-Fauz al-Asghar*, Egypt, 1325, p. 102.
131. M. Y. Musa, *Bain-al-Din wal Falsafa*, Egypt, p. 71.
132. Ibn Sina, *al-Isharat wal-Tanbihat*, Egypt, 1960, vol. III, p. 810.
133. Tusi, *Sharh al-Isharat*, India, 1297 A.H., p. 395.
134. Averroes, *Tahafut al-Tahafut* Eng. trans. by Simon Van Den Bergh London, 1954, p. 323.
135. Shibli, *al-Kalam*, Lahore, 1952, p. 136.
136. Ibn Sina, *al-Isharat* ed. Sulaman Dunya, Egypt, vol. III pp. 251-252.
137. Cf. McCarthy appreciating his work : "Many works were composed on the proofs of Muhammad's prophethood, particularly on the miraculous nature of the Quran. The most famous book on the latter subject was undoubtedly al-Baqillani's book on the miraculous inimitability of the Quran". (*Kitab-al-Bayan*, p. 10).
138. al-Baqillani. *Kitab al-Bayan*, p. 50.
139. *ibid.*, p. 41.
140. *ibid.*, p. 52.
141. *ibid.*, pp. 45-46.
142. Ibn Hazm, *Kitab al Fisal*, Egypt, 1321, p. 2.
143. *ibid.*, p. 7.
144. *ibid.*
145. Averroes, *Tahafut al-Tahafut*, Eng. trans., p. 316.
146. *ibid.*, p. 317.
147. *ibid.*, p. 318.
148. *ibid.*
149. *ibid.*, p. 319.
150. *ibid.*, p. 321.
151. *ibid.*, p. 322.
152. *ibid.*, p. 323.
153. *ibid.*, p. 327. cf. also *Bain al-Din wal Falsafa*. p. 219.

154. *ibid.*, p. 327.
155. *ibid.*, p. 333.
156. *Bain al-Din-wal-Falsafa*, p. 193, cf. also Ghazzali to say "in reality, there is no other cause but God" (*Tahafut al-Tuhafut*, Eng. trans., p. 317).
157. *ibid.*, p. 217.
158. *ibid.*, p. 219. cf. also *Tahafut al-Tahafut*, p. 524.
159. *ibid.*, p. 219. cf. also *Tahafut al-Falasma*, p. 287.
160. *ibid.*, p. 219. cf. also *Tahafut al-Tahafut*, Eng. trans, pp. 537-38.
161. *ibid.*, p. 220. cf. also *Tahafut al-Tahafut*, Eng. trans, pp. 539-40.
162. *Al-Quran*, 36 : 82.
163. *Al-Quran*, 13 : 38.
164. Ibn Sina, *Kitab al-Isharat wal-Tanbihat*, Leyde, 1892, p. 207.
165. *ibid.*, p. 208.
166. *ibid.*, p. 209.
167. *ibid.*, p. 219.
168. Tusi, *Sharh al-Isharat*, Lucknow, (INDIA), 1297 A.H., p. 428.
169. Shah Waliullah, *Tafhimat Ilahiyya*. cf. also Shibli, *IIm al-Kalam*, p. 87.
170. Shah Wali ullah, *Tawil al-Ahadis*, Hyderabad, 1966, p. 101.
171. A great scholar working in Waliullah Academy, Hyderabad Sind, who has made comments, explained and annotated so many works of Shah Waliullah.
172. *Tawil al-Ahadis*, p. 104.
173. Muhammad Yusuf Musa, *Bain al-Din wal Falsafa* E,gypt, 1959, p. 55.
174. *ibid.*, p. 57.
175. *ibid.*, p. 71.
176. *ibid.*
177. Shibli, *Al-Kalam*, Lahore, 1952, p. 136.
178. Ibn Sina, *al-Isharat*, Egypt, ed. Sulman Dunya, Vol. III, pp. 251-252.
179. M. Y. Musa, *Bain-ul-Din wal-Falsafa*, p. 79.
180. *ibid.*, p. 82.
181. Ibn Miskwaih, *Al-Fauz al-Asghar*, Egypt, 1325 A.H. pp. 94.95.
182. *ibid.*, p. 102.
183. M. Y, Musa, *Bain al-Din wal-Falsafa*, p. 70.
184. *ibid.*, p. 60.
185. *ibid.*

186. *ibid.*, p. 59.
 187. *ibid.*
 188. *ibid.*, p. 89.
 189. *ibid.*, p. 90.
 190. *ibid.*
 191. *ibid.*, p. 91.
 192. *ibid.*, p. 83. cf. *al-Mujib*, p. 134, and *Nafh al-Tib*, vol. II, p. 557.
 193. *ibid.*, p. 85.
 194. *ibid.*, p. 61.

CHAPTER IV

NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL CAUSATION—
DEISM OF THE 18TH CENTUARY—KANTIAN
SCIENCE OF NATURE—DAWN OF HISTORICAL
CRITICISM—SCIENTIFIC INTERPRETATION OF
NATURE AND HISTORY—PROPRIETY OF MIRA-
CLES—PROBABILITY OF MIRACLES—THE RE-
INTERPRETATION OF MIRACLES

THE HISTORY OF THE
NATIONS AND OF THE
DEEDS OF THE GREAT
SCIENCE OF THE
CRITICISM AND THE
NATURE AND THE
THE-PROBINGLY
THE INTERPRETATION

MODERN TRENDS IN TAFSIR LITERATURE & THEIR CAUSES

'What were the causes of modern trends in the Tafsir Literature' is an important question which has to be answered. On investigation of the problem there is to be found a background and deeprooted western movement which changed the mode of thinking of the scholars and theologians. It was the idea of 'Naturalism'. It was believed "that the Universe is governed by the 'Laws of Nature', which may or may not be divinely ordained ; and there is no sign of, nor room for, supernatural interference in its working."¹ The doctrine of 'Natural Law' which is held to be derived from the reason and nature of man is not in itself, new. Mr. Rosenthal says :

"Ideas of Natural Law were put forward in ancient times (by Socrates, Plato, etc). In the Middle Ages "Natural Law" was considered a variety of the law of God. The idea was taken up widely in the period of Western bourgeois revolutions (17th and 18th centuries) and its chief advocates (Grotius, Spinoza, Locke, Rousseau, Montesquin, Holback. Kant, Radishsheu. etc) used it to criticise feudalism and affirm the 'Naturalness' and "reasonableness" of bourgeois society. A very much distorted version of Natural law is to be found in the contemporary "social doctrine" of catholicism".²

How these ideas crept in theology, we give here a brief account. Dr. J. S Lawton, very scholarly points out this fact as follows :

"From the time of scientific renaissance, the view of western man regarding the character of the universe and his place in it has undergone a profound revolution, both intellectual and emotional".³

Giving the detail of the same he says :

"Christian apologetic since the 17th century has not unnaturally been pre-occupied with the task of bringing the Christian and the scientific affirmations into an intelligible relationship. The theology of the period of the Illumination, both Orthodox and Deist, was unconsciously striving to deal with this question. The 19th century witnessed the struggle to set the Christian dogmas in a working partnership with the scientifically conceived universe ; whilst the 19th and 20th centuries have seen the drama worked out in the field of historical criticism".⁴

Indicating the religious trends in the 18th century he says :

"Yet the 18th century dogmatics and apologetics concentrated nearly all its attention upon God as an object to be known about. This theology was

impressive in its thoroughness and self-consistency : no woolliness blurred its doctrines, nor sentimentality its ethics. But a religion which does not centre upon the living personal relationship between the church and its Lord, and the supernatural dimension of the believer's life, is not the whole Gospel of God".⁵

He further adds :

"Deist and traditionalist alike believed in an objective norm of morality, whose fulfilment leads to happiness ; and morality was taken much more seriously at this time than many people have supposed".⁶

A wave of rationalism had spread throughout the country at that time :

"The rational humanism of the 18th century was nominally set in the context of eternal life ; but the other worldliness was simply concerned with the rewards and punishments meted out in respect of an ethic whose demands were largely contained within the requirements of evil society and personal uprightness (according to Mr. Lecky) : "A theology which regarded Christianity as an admirable auxiliary to the policeforce".⁷

It was quite natural that the concept of miracle was questioned because it had a bearing upon the Gospel and became inseparable from it because the Christian doctrine, in its very essence, is supernatural. So it was examined on rational grounds :

"It is not surprising that in the 18th century scheme of doctrine the connection between miracles and the revealed doctrines came to appear so artificial. When revelation and faith are both rationalized and externalized, miracles become the bridge between a rational creed and its rational acceptance. The supernatural character of miracles came to be thought of almost entirely in terms of their non-conformity to nature : hence their appeal was directed exclusively to the discursive part of man's mind rather than to his moral and spiritual judgement".⁸

Attempts to harmonize the miraculous with the scientific knowledge were made in the shape of reinterpretation of the scriptures :

Here was something more than an affront to the accepted interpretation of scripture : if the new conclusions had been acceptable, scripture might have been treated allegorically in order to accommodate them. The church was faced with an apparent overturning of a Universe in which man had stood as the crown of creation".⁹

It was considered a duty to make an adequate inquiry into the truth of religion. In spite of difficulties involved in such an investigation which apparently

seemed to be heresy, much energy was spent to justify the importance of "reason" echoes of which may be seen in the writings of various authors i.e. Hume's "Enquiries" or Kant's "Religion in the Limits of Reason Alone". Mr. John H. King cites the necessity of making such researches :

"At one time, among all men, the supernatural conditions predominated over all real and blended with all the phases of the natural world. Yet over as men advanced in knowledge, ever as they made fuller researches into the conditions of the things both objective and subjective, the phenomena of the natural world became more definite, whilst at the same time the assumptions of the supernatural passed away or became restricted to the higher concepts that define the origin, control and destiny of all existences. From the early concept that the relation of all things in the material as well as the organic world were due to the interposition of the various supernatural powers and principles. men now recognize natural laws, special and universal, interacting on all things".¹⁰

The investigation in religion and search for truth was made zealously. In the words of an author this idea is illustrated as follows :

"It is obvious that the most indispensable requisite in regard to Religion is that it should be true. No specious hopes or flattering promises can have the slightest value unless they be genuine and based upon substantial realities".¹¹

He further concludes :

"It is poor honour to sequester a creed from healthy handling, or to shrink from the serious examination of its doctrines. That which is true in Religion cannot be shaken ; that which is false no one can desire to preserve".¹²

John. H. King in his book "The Supernatural : Its Origin, Nature, and Evolution" has striven to present an evolution of gods in Greece, India, China, Peru and Mexico, etc, and the evolution of a Supreme Deity as conceived and believed in Christianity and Hinduism. In conclusion he says :

"In conclusion, we can but recapitulate the principles that we have necessarily recognized in our study of the researches of the human mind to evolve the Deity, these demonstrate that co-ordinately with the principles of his social advancement have been the aspirations of Deity he was capable of evoking. Even the god-idea differentiated in sympathy with man's surroundings, and we now know that every stage of this advanced conception of God was due to a primary original thought in one man's mind which was unfolded to his

fellows and worked into shape by his peers. More whatever the nature of the exalted thought it was not always possible for others to accept it, some could only repose on the lower manifestations of deity in accord with the tone of their mind-powers".¹³

He mentions a gentleman who while lying in his bed and listening to the ticking of his clock gradually associated certain words with the sound of the ticking. He put them in every room and professed to be governed altogether by the directions they gave him.¹⁴

He scrutinize the supernals on rational grounds and tries to refute the same :
 "Like the founder of the Hunting donians, they had only to pray and they obtained whatever they required, whether it were a dinner, a new suit of clothes, or a cheque for a thousand pounds. It is wonderful how much incredulity there is in the world. If men would but have confidence in the Divine precept there would be no need for asylums or railways or any of the other manifestations of the means of doing ; they have only to pray aright and the humblest member of a Methodist flock might outmagic and wonders of The Thousands and One Nights".¹⁵

A rationalistic approach to the miraculous birth of Jesus is cited which shows what regard and dignity religion has for a modern mind :

"A grave assembly of religious notables held a sacred convocation to decide whether a Jewish girl in a rural village in Judea more than 1802 years ago, where there were neither newspapers nor poor law guardians, or police inspectors to take note of deviations from virtue, had like many other young girls in all countries been indiscreet in her conduct, or whether as had been assumed, the Divine effluence had conceived in her womb. Common people of the world would have affirmed that a body of priests bound to celibacy, and consequently ignorant of the ways of the sinful world, were the most incapable jury for such an investigation. The common mind, if it had not remitted the investigation to a school of Doctors, would certainly have appointed a committee of old women for that purpose. However, in Rome they do as Dome does, and the pious bishops not only gave her a clean bill of health, but decreed with all due honours the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception".¹⁶

It is obvious that the reality of miracles is the vital point in the investigation of this subject. If the reality of miracles cannot be established, Christianity loses the only evidence by which its truth can be sufficiently attested. If miracles be

incredible, the supernatural Revelation and its miraculous evidence must both be rejected.

There had been a long and constant struggle to prove the truth of miracles by its defenders while the other party strive their best to refute the same. Dr. J. B. Mozley, an able Bampton lecturer argues the credibility and necessity of the miraculous :

“And certainly, if it was the will of God to give a revelation, there are plain and obvious reasons for asserting that miracles are necessary as the guarantee and voucher for that revelation. A revelation is, properly speaking, such only by virtue of telling us something which we could not know without it. But how do we know that communication of what is undiscoverable by human reason is true? Our reasons cannot prove the truth of it, for it is by the very supposition beyond our reason. There must be, then, some note of sign to certify to it and distinguish it as a true communication from God, which note can be nothing else than a miracle”.¹⁷

He further says :

“Christianity cannot be maintained as a revelation undiscoverable by human reason, a revelation of a supernatural scheme for man's salvation, without the evidence of miracles”.¹⁸

Bishop Butler affirms miracles and the completion of prophecy to be the direct and fundamental proofs :

“The notion of a miracle, considered as a proof of a divine mission, has been stated with great exactness by divines, and is, I think, sufficiently understood by every one. There are also invisible miracles the incarnation of Christ for instance, which, being secret, cannot be alleged as a proof of such a mission ; but required themselves to be proved by visible miracles. Revelation itself, too, is miraculous and the miracles are the proof of it”.¹⁹

Dr. Heurtley, the Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford, regards miracles to be an attestation of the Revelation : “Indeed, it seems inconceivable how without miracles—including prophecy in the notion of a miracle, it could sufficiently have commended itself to men's belief? Who would believe, or would be justified in believing, the great facts which constitute its substance on the “ipse dixit” of an unaccredited teacher? and how, except by miracles, could the first teacher be accredited.”²⁰

Dr. Mansel, the late Dean of St. Paul's, bears similar testimony :

“A teacher who proclaims himself to be specially sent by God and whose teach-

ing is to be received on the authority of that mission, must from the nature of the case, establish his claim by proofs of another kind than those which merely evince his human wisdom or goodness. A superhuman authority needs to be substantiated by superhuman evidence and what is superhuman —is miraculous".²¹

He considers this issue to be very acute and subtle when he concludes :

"For if this is denied, the denial does not merely remove one of the supports of a faith which may yet rest severely another grounds. On the contrary, the whole system of Christian belief with its evidences, all Christianity in short, so far it has any little to that name, so far as it has any special relation to the person of teaching of Christ, is overthrown at the same time".²²

Dr. J. H. Newman, in discussing the idea and scope of miracle (being section I of his Essay I) argues :

"It might even be said that, strictly speaking, no evidenco of a revelation is conceivable which does not partake of the character of a miracle ; since nothing but a display of power over the existing system of things can attest the immediate presence of Him by whom it was originally established ; or, again, because no event which results entirely from the ordinary operation of nature can be the criterion of one that is extraordinary".²³

Dr. Newman, spent much energy to defend the faith, the glimpses of his zealous and earnest strife is seen from his letter to his mother on November 14, 1825 :

"I have begun the essay on "Miracles" in earnest, and I think I feel my footing better and grasp, my subject more satifactory.....I am sure I shall derive great benefit from it in after life."²⁴

He not only defends the miracles of Gospel but also ecclesiastical miracles. He presents his arguments rather in a way of preaching to prove the truth of miracles :

"The mind, habituated to the regularity of nature, is blunted to the overwhelming evidence it conveys ; where by a Miracle it may be roused to reflection, till mere conviction of a superhuman being becomes the first step towards the acknowlengement of a Supreme Power".²⁵

Arguing further he eoncludes :

"While nature attests the being of God more distinctly than it does His moral government, a miraculous event, on the contray, bears more directly on fact of His moral government, of which it is an immediate instance while it

only implies His existence. Hence, besides banishing ideas of Fate and Necessity, Miracles have a tendency to rouse conscience to awaken to a sense of responsibility, to remind of duty, and to direct the attention to those marks of divine government already contained in the ordinary course of events".²⁶

Dr. Farrar, a Hulsean lecturer, appeals to every honest and unsophisticated mind that .

"If miracles be incredibles, Christianity is false. If Christ wrought no miracles, then the Gospels are untrustworthy, if the Resurrection be merely a spiritual idea, or a mythicized hallucination, then our religion has been founded on an error".²⁷

It is very interesting to note that the basis of Christianity is claimed to be the very miracles. Discussing Resurrection of Christ, Dean Mansel says :

"Here, at least, is an instance in which the entire Christian faith must stand or fall with our belief in the supernatural".²⁸

Dr. Mozley not less emphatically makes the same statement :

"Indeed not only are miracles conjoined with doctrine in Christian, but miracles are inserted in the doctrine and are parts of its contents".²⁹

Dr. Heurtley bears the same testimony :

"It is not too much to say, therefore, that the question is vital as regards Christianity".³⁰

Mr. Canon Westcott, in a similar manner, argues the inseparable union of miracles with the Christian faith :

"It is evident that if that if the claim to be miraculous religion is essentially incredible, apostolic Christianity is simply false The essence of Christianity lies in a miracle ; and if it can be shown that a miracle is either impossible or incredible, all further inquiry into the details of its history is superfluous in a religious point of view".³¹

Dr. Mozley, in this connection connection cites an amusing argument :

"The Christian being the most intelligent, the civilized portion of the world, these miracles are accepted by the Christian body as a whole, by the thinking and educated as well as the uneducated part of it, and the Gospel is believed upon that evidence".³²

Discussing the purpose of miracle he regards it a must to attest the supernatural religion, otherwise the Christians would not be justified in believing :

“Christianity cannot be maintained as a revelation undiscoverable by human reason—a revelation of a supernatural scheme for man’s salvation without the evidence of miracles”.³³

Dr. H.P. Liddon, Canon of St. Paul’s discussing the reference of known law to the unknown law and the connection between intellect and the moral says :

“Miracle is an innovation upon physical law,—or at least a suspension of some lower physical law by the intervention of a higher one, — in the interests of moral law. The historical fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead identifies the Lord of physical life and death with the legislator of the Sermon on the mount. Miracle is the certificate of identity between the Lord of Nature and the Lord of Conscience—the proof that He is really a Moral Being who subordinates physical to moral interests. Miracle is the meeting-point between intellect and the moral sense”.³⁴

Dr. Mansel claims the miracles and dogmas of Christianity to be established on scientific grounds :

“But the question is not whether such a conclusion has been asserted, as many other absurdities have been asserted, by the advocates of a theory, but whether it has been established on such scientific grounds as to be entitled to the assent of all duly cultivated minds, whether their own consciences may say to the contrary”.³⁵

Now we survey the arguments of those who oppose the idea of miracles, regard them as absurdities’ and regard them as contrary to Natural law. They reject the notion of supposing a higher law or “unknown law” which should be firstly discovered and than let the miracles to come under it. In their opinion miracles are not established on scientific grounds because a law of nature, in the scientific sense, cannot exist without a class of facts which comes under it, and in reality constitutes the law. They consider that the arguments of theologians are based on mere assumptions and their whole supposition is quite irrelevant and baseless, because “miracles are not limited to one source, but that there are miracles Satanic which are to be disbelieved, as well as Divine and evidential. As the doctrines supposed to be revealed are beyond Reason, and can not in any sense, therefore, be intelligently approved by the human intellect, no evidence which is of so double and inconclusive a nature could sufficiently attest them”³⁶

It is further said in somewhat detail to bear the same testimony against the truth of miracle :

“Satanic miracles, moreover, are not only recognized throughout the Old and New Testament³⁷, but formed a leading feature of the Patristic creed. The

early Christians were not more ready than the heathen to ascribe every inexplicable occurrence to supernatural agency, and the only difference between them was as to the nature of that agency. The Jews and their heathen neighbours were too accustomed to suppose preternatural occurrences to feel much surprise or incredulity at the accounts of Christian miracles ; and it is characteristic of the universal superstition of the period that the Fathers did not dream of denying the reality of Pagan miracles, but merely attributed them to demons, whilst they asserted the Divine origin of their own. The reality of the powers of sorcery was never questioned. Every marvel and every narrative of supernatural interference with human affairs seemed matter of course to the superstitious credulity of the age. However, much miracles are exceptions to the order of nature, they have always been the rule in the history of ignorance. In fact, the excess of belief in them throughout many centuries of darkness is almost fatal to their claims to credence now".³⁸

The obvious deduction from this representation of miracles is that the source and purpose of such supernatural phenomena must always be exceedingly uncertain. "It is perfectly clear that miracles being thus acknowledged to be common both to God and to other spirits they cannot be considered a distinctive attestation of divine intervention. and, as Spinoza³⁹ finely argued not even the mere existence of God can be inferred from them".⁴⁰

So when it is an undeniable fact that the origin of miracles is uncertain, and not unmistakable and decisive, how could the same, then be regarded as distinctive evidential force.

Professor Baden Powell initiates an interesting point when he says :

"At the present day it is not a miracle, but the narrative of a miracle, to which any argument can refer, or to which faith is accorded".⁴¹

Consequently, "the discussion of miracles, then, is not one regarding miracles actually performed within our own knowledge, but merely regarding miracles said to have been performed eighteen hundred years ago, the reality of which not verified at the time by any scientific examination, and whose occurrence is merely reported in the Gospels".⁴²

In criticism of Dr. Mozley's argument it is stated :

"Instead of the "thinking and educated" men of science accepting miracles, then as a body, distinctly deny them, and hence the antagonism between science and ecclesiastical Christianity, and Dr. Mozley surely does not require to be told how many of the profoundest critics and scholars of Germany, and

of all other countries in Europe, who have turned their attention to Biblical subjects, have long ago rejected the miraculous elements of the Christian religion".⁴³

It is alleged that the miraculous element is not original in the Gospel but it has somehow crept into it afterwards :

"Whatever explanation may be given, however, it is undeniable that the earliest teachings of Jesus recorded in the Gospel which can be regarded in any degree as historical is pure morality almost, if not quite, free from theological dogmas. Morality was an essence of his system ; theology was an after-thought. It is to the followers of Jesus, and to the master himself, that we owe the supernatural elements so characteristic of the age and people".⁴⁴

Doubts are expressed that the miracles of Jesus were not Divine :

"Justin states that the men of his time asserted that the miracle of Jesus were performed by magical art, for they ventured to call him a magician and deceiver of the people. This cannot be accepted as a mere version of the charge that Jesus cast out demons by Beelzebub, but must have been found by Justin in his Memoirs".⁴⁵

The doubts are further strengthened by other documents :

"In the Clementine Recognitions, moreover, the same charge is made by some of the Scribes, who say that Jesus did not perform his miracles as a prophet, but as a magician. Celrus makes as a similar charge, and Lactantius refers to such an opinion as prevalent among the Jews at the time of Jesus, which we find confirmed by many passages in Talmudic Literature. There was indeed a book called 'Magia Jesu Chrisiti' of which Jesus himself it was pretended, was the author".⁴⁶

Sorcery and Magic are said to be prevailing in Talmud as well as in N.T. :

"The Talmud gives forms of enchanting against mad dogs, for instance, against the demon of blindness, and the like, as well as a formulae for averting the evil eye, and muttering over diseases, So common was the practice of sorcery and magic that the Talmud enjoins that the senior who is chosen into the Council ought to be skilled in the arts of astrologers, jugglers, diviners, sorcerers, etc., that he may be able to judge of those who are guilty of the same" The N.T. bears abundant testimony to the prevalence of magic and exorcism at which its books were written. In the Gospels⁴⁷, Jesus is represented as arguing with the Pharisees, who accuse him of casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.⁴⁸

Similarly Solomon is said to be a great magician :

“The thoroughness and universality of the Jewish popular belief in demons and evil spirits and in the power of magic, is exhibited in the ascription to Solomon, the monarch in whom the greatness and glory of the nation attained its culminating point, of the character of a powerful magician. The most effectual forms of invocation and exorcism, and the most potent spells of magic, were said to have been composed by him, and thus the grossest superstition of the nation acquired the sanction of their wisest king”.⁴⁹

Further, when it is supposed that all miracles are mostly of demoniacal nature, the very idea of the miraculous is refuted :

“The true character of miracles is at once betrayed by the fact that their supposed occurrence has been confined to ages of ignorance and superstition, and that they are absolutely unknown in any time or place where science has provided witnesses fitted to appreciate and ascertain the nature of such exhibitions of supernatural power”.⁵⁰

When it becomes an admitted fact that, firstly, there is no certain distinction between the divine miracles and Satantic miracles, both the agencies bring scarcely recognizable ; secondly, magic and sorcery is even attributtd to even Jesus and Solomon and most of Gospel miracles are of demoniacal character ; and thirdly, that all such ideas and notions of miraculous elements are quite absurd and due to perfect ignorance, now the stage is set to believe that :

“If on the other than, we dismiss the miracles of later ages as false, and as merely the creations of superstition or pious imagination, how can the miracles of the Gospel, which are precisely the same in type, and not better established as facts, remain unshaken ? The Apostles and Evangelists were men of like passions, and also of like superstitions with others of their time, and must be measured by the same standard”.⁵¹

Further it is concluded from all the investigation made into the reality of miracles :

“There is no uncertainty as to the origin of belief in supernatural interference with nature. The assertion that spurious miracles have sprang up round a few instances of genuine miracloous power has not a single valid argument to support it. History clearly demonstrates that whenever ignorance and superstition have prevailed every obscure occurrence has been attributed to supernatural agency, and it is freely acknowledged that, under their influence, inexplicable and miraculous are convertible terms. On the other hand, in

proportion as knowledge of natural laws has increased, the theory of supernatural interference with the order of nature has been dispelled, and miracles have ceased".⁵²

When it is concluded that miracles were nothing but a result of superstitions and ignorance, what importance, then, should be given to Divine Revelation? Consequently, the problem is solved :

"The argument so often employed by theologians that Divine Revelation is necessary for man, and that certain views contained in that Revelation are required by our moral consciousness, is purely imaginary and derived from the Revelation which it seeks to maintain. The only thing absolutely necessary for man is Truth, and to that, and that alone, must our moral consciousness adapt itself, Reason and experience forbid the expectations that we can acquire any knowledge otherwise than through natural channels. To complain that we do not know all that we desire to know is foolish and unreasonable".⁵³

The conclusion is further elaborated into a final decision :

"It is as irrational to accept or demand knowledge unattainable naturally by man's intellect as it is for a child to cry for the moon. We may be certain that information which is beyond the ultimate reach of Reason is as unnecessary as it is inaccessible. Man knows, or may know, all that man requires to know. To deny this is to deny the perfection of the Laws which regulate the Universe. The necessity of Divine Revelation is a pure theological figment utterly opposed to Reason".⁵⁴

And consequently Religion itself receives a fatal blow at its very heart.

2. DEISM OF THE 18TH CENTURY

It is very interesting to quote Lekcy who surveys the declining sense of the miraculous in comparison with the movement of Rationalism in Europe :

"There is certainly no change in the history of the last 300 years more striking or suggestive of more curious enquiries, that which has taken place in the estimate of the miraculous".⁵⁵

In the introduction of his work he states that before Reformation which took place in the first half of the 16th century theologians had a great hold on the people, but the Reformation, being a wide-spread antifeudal and anti-Catholic movement also resulted in Protestantism, which undermined the primacy of spiritual power over secular power. So the importance of the supernatural decreased gradually :

"Towards the close of the eighteenth century the decline of the theological passions enabled men to discuss these matters in a calmer spirit, and when

increased knowledge produced more comprehensive views, the historical standing point was materially altered. It was observed that every great change of belief had been preceded by a great change in the intellectual condition of Europe, that the success of any opinion depended much less upon of its arguments, or upon the ability of its advocates, than upon the predisposition of society to receive it, and thus that predisposition resulted from the intellectual type of the age".⁵⁶

Lecky, commenting on "magic and witchcraft", asserts that in spite of the fact that there had been strong disposition to regard these stories as absurd, no one can map out with exactness the stages of its progress. In his opinion it first became prominent in that great sceptical movement which followed the Restoration, He mentions in this connection :

"Hobbes⁵⁷, who was the most distinguished of living philosophers, had directed all the energies of his scepticism against in-corporeal substances, had treated with unsparing ridicule the conceptions of demons and of apparitions, and had created in his disciples a predisposition to regard them as below contempt. A similar disposition was formed by the philosophy of Bacon⁵⁸, which had then enquired an immense popularity. The Royal Society had been just established; a passion for natural philosophy much resembling that which preceded the French Revolution, had become general; and the whole force of the English intellect was directed to the study of natural phenomenon, and to the discovery of natural laws. In this manner there was formed a general disposition to attribute to every event a natural cause, which was soon followed by a conviction of the absurdity of explaining by a supernatural hypothesis... ..The sense of its probability became for the first time general among educated laymen".⁵⁹

Lecky further points out that in spite of the said influence, in 1664, two women were hanged under a sentence of Sir Matthew Hale.⁶⁰

The educated people, the men of intellect and learning, not only rejected the absurd idea of magic and witchcraft, but also the same habit of their mind caused a repugnance for miracles. Consequently their next step was to criticise the idea of miracles. Lecky says that the stage to reject the miraculous was so set that :

"They are repudiated, not because they are unsupported, but because they are miraculous. Men are prepared to admit almost any conceivable concurrence of natural improbabilities rather than resort to the hypothesis of supernatural interference and this spirit is exhibited not merely by open sceptics, but by men who are sincere".⁶¹

He further concludes that "the repugnance of men to believe miraculous narrative is in direct proportion to the progress of civilisation and the diffusion of knowledge". After an extensive survey of the history of miracles he recapitulates as follows :

"The spirit of Rationalism has become the great centre to which the intellect of Europe is manifestly tending when it (movement) began, Christianity was regarded as a system entirely beyond the range and scope of human reason in the present day, Christianity is regarded as a system which courts the strictest investigation The idea of the miraculous, which a superficial observer might have once deemed its most prominent characteristic has been driven from almost all its entrenchments, and now quivers faintly and feebly through the mists of eighteen hundred years".⁶²

How these ideas were evolved and developed is an important question, and it will be quite justifiable to discuss it briefly. Lecky commenting on "the Declining sense of the miraculous" (II chapter of his work) says :

"Hume investigated the subject from a philosophical point of view ; he endeavoured to frame a general doctrine, determining the relation between miraculous narratives and historical testimony, the comparative improbability of the reality of miracles and of the unverity of historians".⁶³

But Hume was not the first man to reject the miraculous as it is a fact that Hume's method of reasoning has been also anticipated by Locke⁶⁴, who contends that men should not believe any proposition that is contrary to reason, on the authority either of inspiration or of miracle, for the reality of the inspiration or of the miracle can only be established by reason. He says :

"It is harder to believe that God should alter or put out of its ordinary course some phenomenon of the great world for once, and make things act contrary to their ordinary rule purposely".⁶⁵

It is generally taken for granted that David Hume⁶⁶, (1711-1776), one of the three greatest philosophers of the 18th century (the other two being Kant and Berkeley) played the most prominent role in refuting the miraculous form of superstitions prevailing among the people and miracles of the Gospels. He "attacked superstitions and was regarded by many as a wicked theist".⁶⁷

It seems to be quite appropriate that a survey of Hume's arguments should be made. Hume, who gives a great importance to experience, states :

"A wise man, therefore, proportions his belief to the evidence. In such conclusions as are founded on an infallible experience, he expects the event

with the last degree of assurance, and regards his past experience as a full proof of the future existence of that event".⁶⁸

He further adds :

"..... there is no species of reasoning more common, more useful, and even necessary to human life, than that which is derived from the testimony of men, and the report of eye witnesses and spectators".⁶⁹

But in his opinion, belief in human evidence diminishes or rather destroys the force of argument as the event witnessed is unusual or extraordinary :

"But when the fact attested is such a one as has seldom fallen under our observation, here is a contest of two opposite experiences ; of which the one destroys the other, as far as its force goes, and the superior can only operate on the mind by the force, which remains".⁷⁰

Further pursuing the same line of argument, he cites a proverbial saying in Rome :

"I should not believe such a story were it told me by Cato" (Cato being the philosophical patriot, and concludes from it :

"The incredibility of a fact, it was allowed, might invalidate so great an authority"⁷¹.

He now evaluates the miracle on the basis of this argument :

"A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature, and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined"⁷².

Hume admits as a principle, the importance and evidential value of experience and historical witness, but when the same event has some miraculous element in his opinion, it, then, becomes incredible. Distinguishing an extraordinary event from the miracle he cites an example :

"Thus, suppose, all authors, in all languages agree, that, from the first of January 1600, there was a total darkness over the whole earth for eight days : suppose that the tradition of this extraordinary event is still strong and lively among the people : that all travellers, who return from foreign countries, bring us accounts of the same tradition, without the least variation or contradiction : it is evident, that our present philosophers, instead of doubting the fact, ought to receive it as certain and out to search for the causes whence it might be derived.....But suppose that all the historians who treat of England, should agree, that, on the first of January 1600, Queen

Elizabeth died ; that both before and after her death she was seen by her physicians and the whole court, as is usual with persons of her rank ; that her successor was acknowledged and proclaimed by the parliament ; and that, after being interred a month, she again appeared, resumed the throne, and governed England for three years''⁷³. I should rather believe the most extraordinary events to arise from their concurrence, than admit of so signal a violation of the laws of nature''⁷⁴.

He regards such a miraculous event to be a mere falsehood :

“When anyone tells me, that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider with myself, whether it be more probable, that this person should deceive or that the fact, which he relates, should really have happenedIf the falsehood of his testimony would be more miraculous, than the event which he relates ; then ; and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion''⁷⁵.

Discussing the possibility of miracle established of the testimony of experience and evidence he cites his opinion that a miracle has never amounted to a proven fact :

“For first, there is not to be found, in all history, any miracle attested by a sufficient number of men, of such unquestioned good sense, education, and learning, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves ; of such undoubted integrity, as to place them beyond all suspicion of any design to deceive others ; of such credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to lose in case of their being detected in any falsehood''⁷⁶

David Hume, not only refutes the possibility of a miracle on the basis of evidence but also regards it incredible on psychological grounds. He says :

“We may observe in human nature a principle which, if strictly examined, will be found to diminish extremely the assurance, which we might, from human testimony, have, in any kind of prodigy''.....But if the spirit of Religion join itself to the *love of wonder*, there is an end of common sense ; and human testimony, in these circumstances, loses all pretensions to authority''⁷⁷.

Further pursuing the same line of argument he believes it to be the passion in human nature :

“The pleasure of telling a piece of news so interesting, of propagating it, and of being the first reporters of it, spreads the intelligence.....Do not the same passions, and others still stronger, incline the generality of mankind to believe and report, with the greatest vehemence and assurance, all religious

miracles"⁷⁸.

Hume considers that the prevalence of miracles is generally found in savage uncultured and early periods, and the miraculous element is diminishing according to the rise of civilization. So it is concluded that the very belief in miracle is due to ignorance :

"It forms a strong presumption against all supernatural and miraculous relations, that they are observed chiefly to abound among ignorant and barbarous nations ; or if a civilized people has ever given admission to any of them, that people will be found to have received them from ignorant and barbarous ancestors"⁷⁹.

Hume further argues that when the people of one religion deny the miracles claimed by the followers of a rival religion, while they themselves relate their own miracles, why not the same idea of rejecting miracle should not be applied to these of their own :

"When we believe any miracle of Mahomet or his successors, we have for our warrant the testimony of a few barbarous Arabians : And on the other hand, we are to regard the authority of Titus Livius, Plutarch, Tacitus, and, in short, of all the authors and witnesses, Grecian, Chinese, and Roman Catholic, who have related any miracle in their particular religions ; I say, we are to regard their testimony in the same light as if they had mentioned that Mahometan miracle, and had in express terms contradicted it, with the same certainty as they have for the miracle they relate"⁸⁰.

Hume assumes that miracle stories fly about in the infancy of the religions, and when the wise men try to detect the pious fraud, the time is past and the records and witnesses have perished. Therefore, there remains no means of detection. Citing this argument he concludes as such :

"Upon the whole, then, it appears, that no testimony for any kind of miracle has ever amounted to a probability, much less to a proof ; and that, even supposing it amounted to a proof, it would be opposed by another proof ; derived from the very nature of the fact, which it would endeavour to establish. It is experience only, which gives authority to human testimony ; and it is the same experience, which assures us of the laws of nature"⁸¹.

Hume is so zealous to refute the idea of miracle that, in his opinion, "though the Being to whom the miracle is ascribed, be, in this case, Almighty, it does not, upon that account, become whit more probable ; since it is impossible for us to know the attributes or actions of such a Being, otherwise than from the experience which we

have of his productions, in the usual course of nature"⁸². Hume thinks that "ridiculous stories" of miracles can not be regarded to be the foundation of a religion. He does not take them as "the word or testimony of God", but as "the production of a mere human writer and historian". Hence the true foundation of Christianity is faith and not reason :

"I am the better pleased with the method of reasoning here delivered, as I think it may serve to confound those dangerous friends or disguised enemies to the Christian Religion, who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason. Our most holy religion is founded on Faith, not on reason"⁸³.

He, in a very beautiful way, regards Christianity contrary to Reason and consequently absurd, but his concluding words are :

"So that, upon the whole, we may conclude, that the Christian Religion not only was at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one. Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of its veracity : And whoever is moved by Faith to assent to it, is conscious of a continued miracle in his own person, which subverts all the principles of his understanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and experience"⁸⁴.

3. KANTIAN SCIENCE OF NATURE

A Socio-Political trend, the representatives of which tried to correct the shortcomings of the existing society, to change its morals and manners, politics and mode of life by spreading the ideas of goodness, justice and scientific knowledge⁸⁵ called in the history of Europe to be the "Enlightenment" began in the seventeenth century and flourished in the eighteenth century constitutes one of the great spiritual movements of modern Europe.

Discussing the motives and purposes of this movement, Theodore, M. Greene, cites :

"In it we see the Renaissance working itself out through the agencies of its scientific and philosophical discoveries. Because of its influence on Kant, who was in so many essential respects—a thinker of the Enlightenment, we should recall at the outset the main characteristic of this movement. It was essentially revolutionary, directed against the authority of intellectual and religious tradition. The positive force at its core was a determined assertion of the freedom of the individual—freedom in affairs social and political, intellectual and religious. The spirit expressed itself most

emphatically in a new and extravagant belief in the power of reason. Faith in the old presuppositions and authorities, for so long considered valid beyond question, gave way to a spirit of criticism. Faith was now sought exclusively by the path of argument"⁸⁶.

He further adds :

"To strictly religious values the age was for the most blind. Whatever, from the point of view of reason, had about it an air of mystery fell under suspicion ; man's feelings, passions, and sentiments were in all repute. Thus the movement took on an austere and barren coldness..... Thus men lost interest in the older theological issue ; the focus of attention shifted from the next life to this, from the state of man's soul to man's essential humanity"⁸⁷.

Giving the historical context and religious significance of Kant's Religion, he tells :

"The long night of spiritual slavery, men believed, neared its end ; reason, once freed from all trammels, would prove equal to every demand. Is not the world, men asked, after all a good place to live in ? Nay, is it not the best of all possible worlds ? Thus arose an optimism and a self assurance which flourished without serious check until Hume in England and Kant in Germany brought to bear upon it their searching criticism"⁸⁸.

This critical trend was not limited and restricted to one nation or one geographical boundry but spread throughout Europe :

"On its philosophical and religious sides, it first expressed itself in the Netherlands where a spirit of toleration early provided a refuge for thinkers who found themselves harrassed by the laws and prejudices of their native countries. Signs of the same spirit were soon visible in England ; France followed suit ; and before long Germany was permeated with the new doctrine. In England, the apostles of new order were by some called "free-thinkers" while on its religious side the movement came to be connected with the appellation deism. In France, the spokesman 'par excellence' was Voltaire : Rousseau, like Kant, was only partially typical of the age in which he lived. The name "Aufklarung" (enlightenment, illumination) has been given to the parallel movement in Germany"⁸⁹.

The net result of this rationalistic movement was wide-spread which quite turned the tables of the then existing faith and involved various philosophers of various countries :

“The subtle and elaborate philosophies of Descartes and Malebranche, Leibniz, and Spinoza, were far richer in content, far more catholic in scope and interest, than this bold statement of the rationalistic ‘credo’ would indicate; Wolff, however, lacking the imaginative depth and metaphysical talent of his predecessors, had fashioned his system narrowly within the lines of this ‘credo’, and it was Wolff rather than Leibniz who was, for Kant, the spokesman of rationalism. The empiricist, Hume, on the other hand, did most to awaken Kant to the defects of Wolffianism. Kant was familiar with Lock’s incomplete but epoch-making attempt to derive all knowledge from sense-experience and with Berkeley’s subjective idealism which was based, in part, upon Lock’s empirical thesis”⁹⁰.

With this background it would be easy to understand Kant’s opinion about the miraculous element of the religion. He does not regard them to be impossible yet does not accept them to be true on the basis of reason :

“Reason does not dispute the possibility of the reality of the objects of these ideas; she simply cannot adopt them into her maxims of thought and action Reason believes this with a faith which (with respect to the possibility of this supernatural complement) might be called reflective; for dogmatic faith, which proclaims itself as a form of knowledge, appears to her dishonest or presumptuous. To remove the difficulties, then, in the way of that which (for moral practice) stands firm in and for itself, is merely a by-work (paragon), when these difficulties have reference to transcendent question”⁹¹.

Pointing out the damage incurred Kant declares :

“As regards the damage resulting from these morally-transcendent ideas, when we seek to introduce them into religion, the consequences, listed in the order of the four classes named above are :

- (1) (Corresponding) to imagined inward experience (works of grace), the consequences is) fanaticism ;
- (2) to alleged external experience (miracles), superstition ;
- (3) to a supposed enlightening of the understanding with regard to the supernatural (mysteries), illumination, illusion of the “adepts” ;
- (4) to hazardous attempts to operate upon the supernatural (means of grace), thailmaturgy—sheer aberrations of reason going beyond its proper limits and that too for a purpose fancied to be moral (Pleasing to God”⁹².

Discussing miracles, he says :

“As for miracles in general, it appears that sensible men, while not disposed to renounce belief in them, never want to allow such belief to appear in practice”⁹³.

Citing his opinion on works of grace he says :

“Hence we can admit a work of grace as something incomprehensible, but we can not adopt it into our maxims either for theoretical or for practical use”⁹⁴.

Kant explains various kinds of miracles (i.e. angelic, devilish, theistic) and regards all of them deviating from the order of nature. He argues :

“If we assume, however, that God at times and under special circumstances allows nature to deviate from its own laws, we have not, and can never hope to have, the slightest conception of the law according to which God then brings about such an event (aside from the general moral concept that whatever He does will be in all things good—whereby, however, nothing is determined regarding this particular occurrence). But here reason is, as it were, crippled, for it is impeded in its dealings with respect to known laws”⁹⁵.

He, after general discussions, then, refutes, the various kinds of miracles, one by one, in order to prove them to be incredible :

“Among miracles, the demoniac are the most completely irreconcilable with the use of our reason. For as regards theistic miracles, reason would at least have a negative criterion for its use, namely, that even though something is represented as commanded by God, through a direct manifestation of Him, yet, if it flatly contradicts morality, it cannot, despite all appearances, be of God (for example, were a father ⁹⁶ordered to kill his son who is, so far as he known, perfectly innocent). But in the presence of what is taken to be a demoniac miracle even this criterion fails : and were we, instead to avail ourselves in these instances of the opposite, positive criterion for reason's use—namely that, when through such an agency there comes a bidding to a good act which is itself we already recognize as duty, this bidding has not issued from an evil spirit—we might still make a false inference, for the evil spirit often disguises himself, they say, as an angel of light”⁹⁷.

Kant's concept of religion may be seen in his following words, in which he rejects the miraculous to be essential of Religion :

“Here then is a complete religion, which can be presented to all men comprehensively and convincingly through the reason ; while the possibility and

even the necessity of its being an archetype for us to imitate (So far as men are capable of that limitation) have, be it noted, been made evident by means of an example without either the truth of those teachings nor the authority and the worth of the Teacher requiring any external certification (for which scholarship or miracles, which are not matters for everyone,) would be required"⁹⁸.

Even the Religion on the basis of revelation and not on the basis of reason is doubtful in his opinion :

"After all, the revelation had reached the inquisitor only through men and has been interpreted by men, and even did it appear to have come to him from God Himself (like the command delivered to Abraham to slaughter his own son like a sheep) it at least possible that in this instance a mistake has prevailed. But if this is so, the inquisitor would risk the danger of doing what would be wrong in the highest degree ; and in this very act he is behaving unconscientiously. This is the case with respect to all historical and visionary faith ; that is, the possibility ever remains that an error may be discovered in it. Hence it is unconscientious to follow such a faith with the possibility that perhaps what it commands or permits may be wrong, i.e. with the danger of disobedience to a human duty which is certain in end of itself"⁹⁹.

Every faith which is to be supported by the miraculous is quite illusory to Kant :

"There can, indeed, be three kinds of illusory faith that involve the possibility of our over-stepping the bounds of our reason in the direction of the supernatural (which is not, according to the laws of reason, an object either of theoretical or practical use). First, the belief in knowing through experience something whose occurrence, as under objective laws of experience, we ourselves can recognise to be impossible (the faith in miracles). Second, the illusion to include among our rational concepts, as necessary to our best moral interests, that of which we ourselves can form, through reason, no concept (the faith in mysteries). Third, the illusion of being able to bring about, through the use of merely natural means, an effect which is, for us, a mystery, namely the influence of God upon our morality (the faith in means of grace)"¹⁰⁰.

Further, Kant examines the concept of miracle in the light of history :

"Now at the time of the revolution in question there was present among the people (the Romans), who ruled the Jews and who had spread into their very

domain, a learned public from whom the history of the political events of that period has indeed been handed down to us through an unbroken series of writers. And although the Romans concerned themselves but little with the religious beliefs of their non-Roman subjects, they were by no means incredulous of the miracles alledged to have taken place publicly in their midst. Yet they made no mention, as contemporaries, either of these miracles or of the revolution which the miracles produced in respect to religion in the people under their dominion, though the revolution had taken place quite as publicly"¹⁰¹.

He further pursuing same line of argument says :

"If now one asks, what period in the entire known history of the church upto now is the best? I have no scruple in answering the present. And this, because, if the seed of the true religious faith, as it is now being publicly sown in Christendom, though only by a few, is allowed more and more to grow unhindered, we may look for a continuous approximation to that church, eternally uniting all men"¹⁰².

Kant scoffs at the concept of miracle and concludes that "the historical record, which is to authenticate the account of all these miracles, may itself be a miracle (a supersensible revelation). We need not call in question any of the miracles.....In the affairs of life, therefore, it is impossible for us to count of miracles or take them into consideration at all in our use of reason (and reason must be used in every incident of life)"¹⁰³.

After the refutation of the miraculous, Kant shows the drastic effects of the miracles on the people :

"For history tells how the mystical fanaticism in the lives of hermits and monks, and the glorification of the holiness of celibacy, rendered great masses of people useless to the world ; how alleged miracles accompanying all this weighed down the people with heavy chains under a blind superstition ; how with a heierarchy forcing itself upon free men, the dreadful voice of orthodoxy was raised, out of the mouths of presumptuous"¹⁰⁴.

Mr. Johan R. Silber, in his article "The Ethical Significance of Kant's Religion says :

"In the 'Religion' Kant enriches our conception of freedom and volition, of good and evil, and of the nature of responsibility to a surpassing degree. Despite the fact that his conclusions are not final, he points to areas for fruitful continuing research. We are bound to profit from further exploration

of the relation of freedom and rationality, from a further examination of the nature and power of the irrational, and from continuing inquiry into the possibility of non-rational resources of free personal expression. We do not question but rather confirm Kant's greatness by pursuing these lines of enquiry from the point at which his efforts terminated"¹⁰⁵.

John P. Mahaffy, D. D. has¹⁰⁶ explained and defended Kant's "Kritik of the Pure Reason". In his book, "Kant's Critical Philosophy", in the preface, he says :

"Of all metaphysicians he is certainly the greatest, and perhaps the most imperfectly understood.....as of all modern Germans the greatest philosopher, and certainly the best adapted for practical minds"¹⁰⁷.

He, towards the end of his book, discussing the history of 'Pure Reason', has classified the philosophers, in three ways and has tried to distinguish Kant :

- (i) With regard to the object of rational cognition, they must either be Sensualists with Epicurus, or Intellectualists with Plato.
- (ii) In relation to the origin of pure rational cognition, they are either Empiricists or Noologists, they either follow Aristotle and Locke, or Plato and Leibnitz.
Locke is purely inconsequent in his empiricism, for having derived all concepts and principles from experience, he yet endeavours to apply them to prove the existence of God and the immortality of the soul (though both lie entirely outside the bounds of possible experience).
- (iii) In relation to 'method', if we pass over the naturalist of pure reason who relies altogether on what he calls common sense, the only methods in use in the past have been the dogmatic (e.g. Wolff) and the 'sceptical' (e.g. Hume). The one scientific path which has not yet been tried is the critical, and this Kant commends to his reader as a path of great promise in the future"¹⁰⁸.

4. DAWN OF HISTORICAL CRITICISM

Mr. Irwin, stating the role and importance of history in the life of nations regards it a source and criterion of information in connection with the exact understanding of the Bible. He says :

"One cannot understand even Jesus, the greatest of Prophets and Teachers, without knowing something at least of what was commonly felt and thought and believed by the men and women who were the forefathers and his neighbours"¹⁰⁹.

Importance of history is illustrated further by the author who is very zealously

desirous to explain the events narrated in the Bible in the light of history :

“The word “Hittite” means no more to most of us than the words “Amalekite” or “Hivite”, and yet is it not worthwhile for us to know that the Hittites were one of the greatest races of early history? When we read, among the list of the kings who fought in the valley of Siddium, or the Salt Sea, along with the kings of the neighbourhood of Sodom the name of Amraphel, is it not of interest to know the possibility of his identity with Hammurabi, whose code of laws has come to us as one of his most important historical documents of the past?”¹¹⁰

He further adds :

“Do all of us know where the Queen of Sheba came from, which of the Pharaohs was the Pharaoh of Joseph and which the Pharaoh of the oppression, or which was the Herod of the massacre of the innocents and which the Herod of the trial of Jesus? Such things we need a commentary to tell us, if we are to stand on solid ground historically, appreciate the men of antiquity and connect your secular knowledge with your biblical knowledge”¹¹¹.

Richardson, discussing “the real problem of the miracle stories” says :

“During the modern period the problem of the miracles of the Gospels was discussed chiefly in terms of whether they happened or not. *It was thought to be almost entirely a question of historical evidence and metaphysical possibility.* History was understood as a record of objective facts, and facts were things which happened according to objective “natural laws”, and, therefore, the enquiry was conducted along two lines—the examination of the historical evidence and the determination by philosophical enquiry of what is possible. If one decided that the miracles of Gospels really did happen, then their importance obviously lay in their evidential values”¹¹².

Arguing further, he adds :

“But if one decided that miracles did not happen it then became a necessary part of Christian apologetics to explain away the miraculous element in the Gospels and to insist that the essence of Christianity was contained in the truth of its teaching on spiritual and moral questions ; and thus it was hoped to commend the Gospel to a generation which has come to believe that God had revealed a fuller knowledge of His truth through the discoveries of natural science”¹¹³.

What is historical evidence or what is history itself? Richardson says :

“History is not merely a recording of facts, but an interpretation of facts as well. Chronicling facts is not the same thing as history writing, for the

latter involves the selection of the facts which are deemed to be of the greatest importance and the interpretation of those facts in the light of the total outlook and philosophy of the historian. Thus history (i.e., the record of events in past time, not the series of events themselves, which as such we can never know absolutely) is a matter of selection and interpretation of facts"¹¹⁴.

Richardson regards the Evangelists to be historians. "Who—as all historians must do—have selected their facts and given to them their interpretation, with the result that, if we do not accept that interpretation, we become sceptical about the very possibility of our knowledge of the facts themselves"¹¹⁵.

Arguing on the same line, he states :

If we accept their Gospel, we accept the history which they record, and we do not find it difficult to believe with them that the form of the revelation which God made in Christ included the working of the "signs" which proclaimed to the opened eyes the fulfilment of the age long hope of the prophets of Israel, the promise that God would visit and redeem His people.....the truth is that, as we have all along maintained, the miracle stories are a part of the Gospel itself"¹¹⁶.

Answering the "historical criticism" advanced by the critics of the Gospels, he says :

"History cannot be detached from theology in such a way that the miracle stories (or indeed any other part of the Gospel tradition, such as the "teaching" of Jesus) can be treated as the subject of a strictly "scientific" investigation.

The question whether the miracles really happened is not within the competence of the historian to decide, if we mean by an "historian" someone who approaches the subject with an "open mind" and without preconceived ideas—for the sufficient reason that it is impossible to approach the Gospel records in this way"¹¹⁷.

He concludes :

"The present writer can do no more than testify to his conviction that in Christ the power of God was indeed revealed the miracles did happen"¹¹⁸

He further cites another argument that the credibility of miracles of Jesus is above suspicion because :

"Jesus was not crucified because he taught an ethic of love. Apart from the miracles of Jesus, the story of crucifixion as a historical narrative is unintelligible, and the religious significance of man's rejection of God's demon-

strated salvation becomes an anaemic moralism. The miracles of the Gospel are not the figments of a legend loving Christian community; they are the hard facts which underlined man's rejection of God's salvation and which bring history to a climax and the purpose of God to its fulfilment"¹¹⁹.

He has advised the reader of the Gospels, "on the basis of his own studies and insights, make his own estimate of the historical probability of any particular episode for himself"¹²⁰.

At the advent of scientific knowledge it became necessary to ponder over each and every problem on rational grounds in the light of history and nature. Religious issues were not an exception. New forces tended to break up the structure of 18th century theology. They began to discredit the Christian revelation on historical grounds. The duel between reason and revelation assumed new forms. The historical attack raised questions of great importance. "The historic-critical controversy of the 18th century was a very different affair from the struggle in the following century for the acceptance of higher criticism.....At this later period, the scandal was clear that the new views were being propagated by men who were official representatives of the church, whilst in the 18th century the criticisms were advanced by the men who were already enemies"¹²¹.

As the literal infallibility of the Scriptures was called in question on rational grounds, "the Deists were at liberty to attack at whatever point they chose, whilst the orthodox, with their belief in plenary inspiration, were obliged to defend their whole perimeter with equal tenacity. Again the Deist's were crude, as compared with which the hypodermic needle of a modern sceptical historian may be far more deadly"¹²².

The attack was such that "we feel the full throb of the Deist controversy; the age when theological questions were argued at dinner parties and in coffee houses and the time when the views of one's opponents were attributed to their moral decrepitude"¹²³

The position was really a very critical one. The first onslaught upon the citadel of tradition was led by Anthony Collins and Thomas Woolston. In 1713, Collins, a gentleman, of leisure, published a tract entitled 'A Discourse of Free Thinking'¹²⁴ outlining, a rationalistic approach to religious dogma, which brought down upon its author the wrath of Bentley. In 1724, Collins followed up his pamphlet with 'A Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion', and continued his theme in 'The Scheme of literal prophecy, 1727. The 'grounds' were like a thunderbolt: not less than thirty-five written replies to it were counted"¹²⁵.

Dr. John Leland, to whom we owe the first history of English Deism (which appeared in 1754), discussing Collin's work, in his letter to a friend, gives a full account :

"In the year 1713 came out a remarkable treatise, which it will be necessary to take some notice of, entitled, 'A Discourse of Free Thinking, occasioned by the Rise and Growth of a sect called Free-Thinkers'. It was written by Anthony Collins, Esq., though published, as his other writing are, without his name. The same gentleman had in 1707 published an 'Essay concerning the Use of Reason in Propositions, the Evidence whereof depends upon human Testimony' ; in which there are some good observations, mixed with others of a suspicious nature and tendency"¹²⁶.

Commenting on the same he says :

"He all along insinuates, that those who stand up for revealed religion, are enemies to a just liberty of thought and to a free examination and enquiry. His design is certainly levelled against Christianity, and yet he sometimes affects to speak of it with respect. He no-where argues directly against it, but takes every occasion to throw out sneers and insinuations, which tend to raise prejudices in the minds of his readers"¹²⁷.

The importance and significance of the work is explicit from the fact that a French translation of the 'Discourse of Free-Thinking', was carried on under Mr. Collin's own eye and printed at the Hague in 1714, "though it bears London on the title page"¹²⁸. He further says :

"Collins uses as a cat's paw—a book by William Whitson, 'Essays towards restoring the true Text', 1722, in which the hypothesis was advanced that Jewish scribes had rearranged much of the O.T. material so as to obscure a great part of the original prophecies of the Messiah"¹²⁹.

He further adds :

"From 1727 to 1729 there appeared the six discourses on miracles by Thomas Woolston who was subsequently indicated for blasphemy and died in prisonThe Resurrection, contends Woolston, was the most notorious and monstrous fraud ever put on mankind, engineered by the disciples who stole the body of Christ from the sepulchre"¹³⁰.

Dr. Leland in his letter VIII, to a friend, mentions Mr. Woolston and introduces him in a very interesting manner :

“And now, under pretence of acting the part of a moderator in this controversy, a new antagonist arose, Mr. Woolston, who endeavoured to allegorize away the miracles of our Saviour, as Mr. Collins had done the prophecies. This he first attempted in a pamphlet, entitled, ‘A Moderator between an Infidel and an Apostate’, and afterwards more largely in six Discourses on the miracles of our Saviour, which were successively published at different times, in the years 1727, 1728 and 1729”¹³¹.

Commenting on the nature and contents of the same he illumines :

“..... to show that the accounts of the great facts recorded in the Gospels are to be understood wholly in a mystical and allegorical sense ; and that taken in the literal and historical sense, they are false, absurd and fictitious. This attempt he hath carried on with greater rudeness and insolence than any of those that appeared before him”¹³².

Woolston denied the truth of specific statements in the N.T. on historical ground which brings out the fact that historical certitude is something very different from logical or experimental certitude. Historical knowledge did not attain such an importance before this time :

“In the early 18th century it was not yet sufficiently grasped that questions of historical probability must largely turn upon the judgements of human personality, the whole of man, all his cognitive and intuitive powers are needed to determine, let alone to evaluate the deeds of men in the past. In the case of Christ’s life, historical enquiry which does not take in account the whole impact of his life giving personality is sterile.”¹³³

The historical controversy continued till 1748. On the Deist side there were Chubb and Annet. Annet produced following works :

‘Judging for Ourselves’, 1739.

‘The Resurrection of Jesus consideration’, 1744.

‘Supernatural Examined’, 1747.

Chubb presented his work ‘Discourse on Miracles’ in 1741.

Dr. Leland who in his letter XIII, has given a detailed account of Mr. Chubb’s posthumous works, shows Chubb’s uncertainty and inconsistency with respect to a future state of Existence, and a future judgement and that he absolutely rejects the Jewish Revelation and that he hath done all he can to weaken Christianity and expose it.¹³⁴

Introducing Chubb, Dr. Leland unveils his disguised figure as follows :

“Among the deistical writers of this present age, Mr. Chubb made no inconsiderable figure. He was, though not a man of learning, regarded by many as a person of strong natural parts and acuteness, and who had a clear manner of expression. He was the author of great number of tracts, in some of which he put on the appearance of a friend to Christianity ; though it was no difficult matter to discern that his true intension was to betray it. One of the most remarkable of these tracts was his “True Gospel of Jesus Christ asserted” ; in which, under pretence of asserting the gospel of Christ in its genuine simplicity, he really endeavoured to subvert and expose it’¹³⁵

It is very interesting to note that Chubb, while absolutely rejecting the Jewish revelation, speaks very favourably of Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) : “whether the Mahometan revelation be of a divine original, or not, there seems to be a plausible pretence, arising from the circumstances of things, for stamping a divine character upon it”¹³⁶.

On the orthodox side, there were Chandlers and Gilbert West. Chandler’s work saw the light under the captions of :

“A Vindication of the Christian Religion”, 1725.

“A Discourse of the Nature and Use of Miracles”, 1725.

“The Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ”, 1730.

West presented his work, “Observations on the History and Evidences of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ” in 1747.

In the year 1748 Hume’s two popular works, “Treatise of Human Nature’ and ‘Enquiry Concerning the Human Understanding’ appeared. Hume’s arguments, really were not new but they acted as lenses which focussed the light and heat to burning points, concentrating the critical work of a whole generation”¹³⁷.

To recapitulate Hume’s arguments already discussed in detail, Dr. Lawton says :

“Hume makes three admissions, which would seem to take the sting out of the essay. First, he says that testimony may justify belief in something which “seems” miraculous, though it can not prove such an event to have been worked by God. Similarly a miracle can never be proved so as to be the foundation of a system of religion. And finally at the end of the essay he says that his arguments will not convince anyone who already accepts the Christian faith”¹³⁸.

Dr. Leyland in his letter XVI introducing Mr. Hume says :

“I now send you some observations upon Mr. Hume, an ingenious writer, who hath lately appeared against the Christian cause, and that in a manner which seems to have something new in it, and different from what others had written before him, especially in what he calls his Philosophical Essays concerning Hume’s understanding he hath, in many instances, carried scepticism to an unreasonable height ; and seemth everywhere to affect an air of making new observations and discoveries”¹³⁹.

Dr. Leyland, after making detailed observations on the various arguments of Hume in his letters XVI-XXI, in the last letter concludes :

“But enough of Mr. Hume, who, if we may judge of him by his writings, will scarce be charged with the fault of having carried humility to an excess. A pity is that he hath not made a better use of his abilities and talents, which might have laid a just foundations for acquiring the praise he seems so fond of, as well as rendered him really useful to the world, if he had been as industrious to employ them in serving and promoting the excellent cause of religion, as he hath unhappily been in endeavouring to weaken and expose it”¹⁴⁰.

Commenting on the effect it caused, Dr. Lawton cites :

“Though the essay has not destroyed and will not destroy the belief in miracles, it did in fact help to undermine the 18th century theological view of miracles as an independent external authorization of religious truth”¹⁴¹.

Along with Hume one who “struck the characteristic blow against the traditional Protestant distinction between the miracles of the New Testament and those of the Church”, was Middleton ; “He was a man whose scholarship was admired by Bishop Warburton, and who had taken great pains to study the Roman claims for purposes of refutation”¹⁴². His work appeared in 1748 under the caption :

“Free Inquiry into the miraculous powers, which are supposed to have subsisted in the Christian Church, from the Earliest Ages through several successive centuries”.

He made the standard of criticism held by Hume somewhat more acute and refuted the miraculous on a new ground :

“The credibility of facts lies upon to the trial of our reason and senses, but the credibility of witnesses depends upon a variety of principles, wholly, concealed from us. As witnessed to the miraculous, the Fathers can be ruled out practically en bloc, on account of their prejudices, superstitious temperament and interest in proving the events to be true. We find them roundly

affirming things evidently fictitious, in order to strengthen as they fancied the evidences of the Gospel"¹⁴³.

Commenting on its influence, Dr. Lawton says :

"It is impossible to exaggerate the implicit not less than the explicit influence of this idea since 18th Century"¹⁴⁴.

John Stuart Mill, in his essay, "Utility of Religion", says :

"History so far as we know it, bears out the opinion that mankind can perfectly well do without the belief in a heaven"¹⁴⁵.

Such were the Deistic attacks upon the Christian faith. The 'faithful' believers in Christian dogma were also awake and they strove their best to answer the objections in an orthodox-rationalized style. The most popular work, in this connection may be named Newman's Second Essay on Miracles (1843), and Wasley's letter to Middleton, concluding that if the credibility of all witnesses is certainly known in no case, then "farewell to the credit of all history, not only sacred but profane"¹⁴⁶.

SCIENTIFIC INTERPRETATION OF NATURE AND HISTORY

J. S. Lawton is right when he says that "to anyone who is interested in the religion of the Bible, the question of miracles can never be merely academic"¹⁴⁷. Because of the fact that miracles are inseparable from the Holy Scripture, and the essence of the Holy Scripture is that the "Word became flesh" in a particular historic person. So it was natural that the scientific knowledge of the age made the Christian scholars to present, on rational grounds, the revelation and the historic person of Jesus. At this time, the Christian theology was at a loss :

"The advent of the scientific study of nature and history had posed many problems for Christian thinkers, the emergence of the scientific approach to nature and history has played a part in much deeper changes for Christian thinking. Before the scientific renaissance began to pull down the medieval cosmogony and cosmology, the Reformation had already dislodged a large part of Europe from its allegiance to the Roman church"¹⁴⁸.

As the Christian concept of revelation is entirely connected with miracles, he says : The question of the occurrence and character of miracles arose in its modern form, as we have seen, when men began to approach the study of history and theology with their minds pre-conditioned by the achievements and technique of the Scientific Renaissance"¹⁴⁹.

He further points out : "In the region of open controversy, the points of view adopted by men of religion upon specific questions relating to nature and history

have suffered a long succession of defeats at the hands of the men of science. It has, therefore, been thought plausible to argue that the issue between science and theology could be completely resolved by the evacuation on the part of the latter of all territory rightly belonging to the former—the physical universe being left wholly in the hands of science to describe, whilst religion would deal with the things of the spirit”¹⁵⁰.

The concept of miracles, in no way, in this age of reason, could be exempted :

“The question of miracles thus stands in a peculiarity conspicuous position in the modern apologetic endeavour, for it is this aspect of God’s revealing action which discriminates the Christian and the scientific worlds of thought most sharply. The miraculous has appeared in the controversies of the past three centuries as the most intractable of the elements of Christian thought which have come within the sphere of criticism from the modern approaches to nature and history”¹⁵¹.

Depicting the break up of the structure of 18th century theology and mentioning the trends and criterion of true knowledge in that age, Dr. Lawton says :

“The most significant changes, as we shall see, were generated from within religious thought itself ; but we shall first give some account of the forces working from without—the scientific interpretation of nature and the scientific interpretation of history”¹⁵².

How this attitude and trend began ? Dr. Lawton, replying to the question says :

“The modern science of historiography is generally dated from the appearance of Wolffs’ “PROLEGOMENA to HOMER”, 1795, B. G. Neibuhr’s “History of Rome”, 1838, and Ranks’ “History of the Popes”, 1834. These writers brought to their study a systematic and minute method of examining, criticizing comparing historical sources, which has become the hall mark of modern scholarship”¹⁵³.

He further says :

“The stage was thus set in the 19th century for the wedding of the science of history with the conception of evolution drawn from biology. History having been described as a casual process, whose terms were of the same order as those of scientific classifications, it could take its place as one more chapter in the story of life upon the planet. Few in the 19th century questioned whether, being constituted of an aggregate of conscious, free personalities, history could yield all its secrets to such treatments”¹⁵⁴.

Describing the influence of advent of such historical knowledge he states :

“In the 19th century, however, the positivist conception of history insinuated

its influence into every philosophical and theological question"¹⁵⁵.

Viewing the position of 19th century theology he states :

"It is even now difficult to enter into the feelings of those who lived in the spring time of the 19th century optimism regarding the possibilities of science which was hailed by some of the greatest minds of the period as the solvent for most of the worlds' ethical, philosophical and theological problems. In its philosophical optimism the new spirit was the successor of 18th century Deism"¹⁵⁶.

The spirit of the time, very much impressed by the scientific advancement of knowledge, was losing its stand with regard to beliefs specially in miracles :

"Men had come to be prepared to admit almost any conceivable concurrence of nature improbabilities rather than resort to a supernatural hypothesis The tide of human opinion was running fast against the belief in miracles. The most telling influence on the intellectual level was the scientific study of history ; but the influence of scientific thought in general has also vitally affected the belief"¹⁵⁷.

The science of history was born with a strong bias against the supernatural. Illuminating the influence of advent of scientific knowledge in connection with the belief in the miraculous he states :

"Its influence has been felt in two successive stages. In the first place there was the attempt to rule out the admission of the miraculous on the basis of the philosophy of induction ; and in the second place there came the admission of the provisional character of scientific laws, which has rendered it well-nigh possible to say of any given event that it lies outside the domain of nature"¹⁵⁸.

Historical examination of events of all sorts became a fundamental principle, and it was understood that the Bible itself should not be an exception. "This was no more scissors and paste-procedure ; it involved such questions as inferring a natural explanation for an event from surrounding evidence as opposed to the supernatural explanation offered by the ancient author. It was in fact in connection with the histories of ancient Greece and Rome that the principles of historical criticism in something like a systematic form came into England, in the writings of Thirlwall Grote and Thomas Arnold. (Thirlwall's History of Greece appeared in 1835 and Grote's in 1846-1856). In a letter to Bunsen in 1835, Arnold wrote that what had been done for the histories of ancient Greece and Rome by Wolff and Neibhur ought to be done for the histories of the Old Testament"¹⁵⁹.

The process newly adopted for the inference from historical conclusion was also applied to the miracles of the Gospel :

“The same processes of comparison came to be applied to the miracles stories of the New Testament ; and a serious problem was raised when it was realized, not only that these stories are instances of wellknown types in the histories of many peoples, but that in heathen and rabbinic circles contemporary with the N.T. the process of creating miracle stories was actually at work”¹⁶⁰.

The criterion of the science of History itself was considered to be based on Natural Laws :

“History could only become a science when it is conceived as lying entirely within the sphere in which the law of cause and effect has unreserved and unrestricted dominion”¹⁶¹.

When we contemplete how this situation was created we observe the influences of various popular philosophers. One of them was Hegel (1770-1831) :

“Another powerful influence in the formative period was Hegel, who saw history as the successive periods corresponding to the ascending phases in the self evolution of the absolute being. Although this view—that ideas create history—was the exact opposite of the view which was later to predominate, it proved a powerful stimulus in the mid—19th century to the causal evolutionary view of history, especially as regards the evolution of religious ideas”¹⁶².

Another is Professor Baden Powell who opines the complete denial of admissibility of the miraculous :

“Professor Baden Powell not only attacked the possibility of establishing that any event was miraculous, but attempted to draw away religious truth altogether from the sphere of historical controversy”¹⁶³.

Another popular personality in this connection is Mill (1806-73) :

“In J.S. Mill, 19th century science found its schoolman who attempted to give so scientific method—a philosophical and rational basis. He is a grim warning of what can be achieved by skilful education with religion excluded from the curriculum ; for he grew up an intellectual giant, yet with one side of his personality atrophied.....Mill came to the conclusion that the method of inference from crucial instances, and the uniformity of natural causation which it presupposes, must represent a fundamental truth about nature”¹⁶⁴.

Tracing the influence of his philosophy it is said :

“The position into which he had helped to elevate the method of induction because ever more influential as new areas of knowledge bore witness to its efficacy. There were many who were led to the position that belief in miracles must be denied in practice as a matter of principle”¹⁶⁵.

Carlyle (1795-1881) opined in this connection in a decisive manner :

“Carlyle believed that the newer scientific method had succeeded where the ‘a priori’ method had failed, and that it was as sure as mathematics that a miracle had never happened”¹⁶⁶.

The most eminent of such persons in the 19th century was T.H. Huxley. He was not only a “gifted expositor” but also a “shrewd—controversialist”, an important figure which stood in the front rank of the scientific thinkers of his day :

“No one, says Huxley, has any difficulty in rejecting these stories of the miraculous. Yet no one doubts either the good faith of the writer or that he was a contemporary enquirer who had access to the witnesses of the facts. These stories are rejected, yet the Gospel miracles—far worse attested—are accepted”¹⁶⁷.

So the concept of the miracle became a target of the sceptics in the 19th century. The advent of scientific knowledge refuted its possibility :

“The marvellous, in order to possess evidential value as to Divine interposition, needed, in a scientific age, to be conceived as the unaccountable, as evincing inexplicability in terms of natural law”¹⁶⁸.

The new sciences psychology and anthropology also played a role to refute the idea of the miraculous :

“The real attack upon miraculous stories today.....is made by psychology and anthropology. For these sciences claim to show how naturally the stories would arise under certain individual and social conditions of mind, even if the events they allege never took place. They do not attempt to prove that the events could not have taken place ; all they purport to do is to take the value out of the testimony that they did take place”¹⁶⁹.

The application of newly discovered scientific methods had immense effects on theological issues which produced apologetic attitude. The gist of the consequences thus happened in the 18th and 19th century is :

“The theoretical thinking of the 18th century had assumed that human nature was a given entity, the same at all times. The following century came to be characterized by its sense of history : even the rediscovery of the importance of the intuitive aspects of the human thought, which gave rise to the great religious revivals, opened up understanding of the evolution of human ideas and beliefs”¹⁷⁰.

Mentioning its effects he says :

“The historical approach becomes typical of all sorts and conditions of thinkers : it marks Newman’s Essay on Development no less than the work of an agnostic anthropologist. The rationalism with which the apologist came to have to deal was clothed in the guise of historical analyses ; at every point, an air of empirical justification was given to philosophical and theological criticism”¹⁷¹.

6. PROPRIETY OF MIRACLES

C.S. Lewis, discussing the propriety of miracles, has rightly quoted Selley (*Ecce Homo*, Chap. XVI) :

“The principle at the same moment that it explains the Rules supersedes them”¹⁷².

The basis misunderstanding pertaining to the idea of the miraculous is to assume the miraculous to be the violation of nature as is generally understood by the Naturalists, and also that the natural laws never change :

“On such questions (says Baden Powell) we can only hope to form just and legitimate conclusions from an extended and unprejudiced study of the laws and phenomena of the nature world. The entire range of the inductive philosophy is at once based upon, and in every instance tends to confirm, the immense accumulation of evidence, the grand truth of the universal order and consistency of natural causes, as a primary law of belief ; so strongly entertained and fixed in the mind of every truly inductive inquirer, that he cannot even conceive the possibility of its failure”¹⁷³.

A miracle, when regarded to be a violation of nature and investigated on the assumption that natural laws never change, cannot be proved to actually happen :

“An alleged miracle”, Baden Powell concludes, “can only be treated in one of two ways : as a physical event, to be investigated by reason and referred to physical causes –when it ceases to be supernatural ; or asserted on the authority, of inspiration, when it ceases to be capable of investigation by reason”¹⁷⁴.

Discussing the difference of opinion between the Naturalist and the Supernaturalist, Lewis says :

“The Naturalist believes that a great process, or “becoming”, exists on its own in space and time and that nothing else exists—what we call particular things and events being only the parts into which we analyse the great process takes at given moments and given points in space. This single, total reality he calls nature”¹⁷⁵.

Citing the opinion of the Supernaturalist he says :

“The Supernaturalist believes that One Thing exists on its own and has produced the frame work of space and time and the procession of systematically connected events which fill them. This frame work, and this filling, he calls Nature. It may, or may not, be the only reality which the one Primary Thing has produced. There might be other systems in addition to the one we call Nature”¹⁷⁶.

The points of agreement and difference of opinion between the said two parties are concluded as follows :

“The supernaturalist agrees with the Naturalist that there must be something which exists in its own right ; some basic Fact whose existence it would be nonsensical to try to explain because this Fact is itself the ground or starting point of all explanations. But he does not identify this Fact with “the whole show”. He thinks that things fall into two classes. In the first class we find either things or (more probably) One Thing which is basic and original, which exists on its own. In the second we find things which are merely derivative from that One Thing”¹⁷⁷.

He further adds :

“The one basic Thing has caused all the other things to be. It exists on its own ; they exist because it exists. They will cease to exist if it ever ceases to maintain them in existence ; they will be altered if it ever alters them”¹⁷⁸.

Lewis indicating the propriety of miracles, says :

“There are rules behind the rules, and a unity which is deeper than uniformity. A supreme workman will never break by one note or one syllable or one stroke of the brush the living—and inward law of the work he is producing. But he will break without scruple any number of those superficial regularities and orthodoxies which little, unimaginative-critics mistake for its laws”¹⁷⁹.

Further it is quite impossible and inconceivable for a man to be full aware of Nature itself and—consequently cannot refute the idea of miracle :

“Butler is concerned simply to make the point that we may not unreasonably expect nature to have been created on a long term policy, many aspect of which will lie beyond the limited powers of man to foresee or correlate with the ordinary cause of things”¹⁸⁰

C.S. Lewis illumines the same idea as follows :

“If we had grasped as a whole the inner most spirit of the work which God ‘worketh from the beginning to the end’ and of which Nature is only a part

and perhaps a small part, we should be in a position to decide whether miraculous interruptions of Natures' history were more improprieties unworthy of the Great Workman or expressions of the truest and deepest unity in His total work. In fact, of course, we are in no such position"¹⁸¹.

Dr. Lawton argues that when exceptions to a law appear, it means that the law was not complete enough or that the really ultimate cause had not been properly understood. He cites an interesting example :

"It might have been thought a general law of nature that all swans were white, before any black ones were observed"¹⁸².

Uniformity in the law perceptible to our senses is an established fact, but this does not regard miracle to be a violation :

"I do not say that the normalities of Nature are unreal. The living fountain of divine energy, solidified for purposes of this spatio-temporal Nature into bodies moving in space and time, and thence, by our abstract thought, turned into mathematical formulae does in fact, for us, commonly fall into such and such patterns. In finding out those patterns we are, therefore, gaining real, and often useful, knowledge. But to think that a disturbance of them would constitute a breach of the living rule and organic unity whereby God, from His own point of view, works is a mistake. If miracles do occur then we may be sure that not to have wrought them would be the real inconsistency"¹⁸³.

C.S. Lewis, proves the occurrence of miracles on mathematical grounds :

"He (the scientist) calculates what will happen, or what must have happened on a part occasion, in the belief that the situation, at that point of space and time is or was A. But if supernatural force has been added, then the situation really is or was AB. And no one knows better than the scientist that AB cannot yield the same result as A. The necessary truth of the laws, far from making it impossible that miracles should occur makes it certain that if the Supernatural is operating they must occur. For if the natural situation by itself, and the natural situation plus something else, yielded only the same result, it would be then that we should be faced with a lawless and unsystematic universe. The better you know that two and two make four, the better you know that two and three don't"¹⁸⁴.

Consequently he concludes :

"It is, therefore, inaccurate to define a miracle as something that breaks the laws of Nature"¹⁸⁵.

William Adams, in an "Essay in answer to Mr. Hume's Essay on Miracles,

1752, discussing propriety of miracles, argues :

“Miracle, far from militating against natural uniformity, actually implies it as its background ; and in fact the uniformity of nature is no more disturbed by a miracle than by an iron ship that floats. In moral agents we look for moral causes, for reasons or motives to induce them to act, as well as the natural powers of acting. The laws of the moral world are as certain as those of the physical order. With adequate evidence and understandable moral causes at work, therefore, it is, reasonable, to accept the testimony to miracles”¹⁸⁶.

George Campbell, in his *Dissertation on Miracles*, 1762, criticising Hume’s doctrine of experience and proving the propriety of miracles says :

“Children given unlimited assent to testimony long before they have experience to act for themselves : how then can the acceptance of testimony be grounded in experience ? Even the commonest peasant derives vastly more of his knowledge from testimony than from personal experience ; if our acceptance of testimony were to be based only on personal experience, our belief in matters of fact would have very narrow bounds”¹⁸⁷.

The idea of the miraculous is proved also on some other grounds :

“Modern physical research, however, has provided undeniable testimony to many strange phenomena bearing a remarkable resemblance to occurrence attributed over and over again to the saints and mystics”¹⁸⁸.

Dr. Lawton, arguing that miracle is not non-scientific, says : “When we turn from the idea of law to that of causation, the situation is the same, Tennant tells us. Science proper does not and cannot assert the non-existence of the supernatural ; It may be “atheous”, by the rules of its game, but is not atheistic. Its world is not proved, or even asserted, to be a “closed system”, or a dead mechanism and no more. But, so long as the constitution of nature is not exhaustively known, it is no more possible to assert that a given marvel is beyond the unaided powers of nature than to affirm that an event is describable in terms of natural law, as systematized up to date, is for ever or intrinsically incapable of being subsumed under natural law”¹⁸⁹.

7. PROBABILITY OF MIRACLES

C.S. Lewis, discussing probability of miracles, quotes Hume from his “*Treatise of Human Nature*” concerning probability and says : “The argument up to date shows that miracles are possible and there is nothing antecedently ridiculous in the stories which say that God has sometimes performed them”¹⁹⁰.

To find out lies, exaggerations, misunderstandings and hearsay from all stories (including those of miracles) there must be some criterion. What should be this criterion? Lewis answers:

"In one sense, of-course, our criterion is plain. Those stories are to be accepted for which the historical evidence is sufficiently good. But then, as we saw at the outset, the answer to the question, "How much evidence should we require for this story? depends on our answer to the question, 'How far is this story intrinsically probable?' We must, therefore, find a criterion of probability".

Criticising Hume's doctrine of probability he says: "The whole idea of Probability (as Hume understands it) depends on the principle of the Uniformity of Nature. Unless Nature always goes on in the same way, the fact that a thing had happend ten million times would not make it a whit more probable that it would happen again. And how do we know the Uniformity of Nature? A moment's thought shows that we do not know it by experience. We observe many regularities in Nature. But of-course all the observations that men have made or will make while the race lasts cover only a minute fraction of the events that actually go on"¹⁹¹.

He concludes:

"Experience, therefore, cannot prove uniformity has because uniformity to be assumed before experience proves anything.....Unless Nature is uniform, nothing is either probable or improbable. And clearly the assumption which you have to make before there is any such thing as probability cannot itself be probable"¹⁹².

Commenting on Hume's conclusion that all miracles are infinitely improbable, Lewis tells: "The only kind of probability he allows holds exclusively within the frame of uniformity. When uniformity is itself in question (and it is in question the moment we ask whether miracles occur) this kind of probability is suspended. And Hume knows no other. By this method, therefore, we cannot say that miracles are either probable or improbable"¹⁹³.

Lewis, stressing his point of probability as he has repeatedly pointed out says: The historical evidence cannot be estimated unless we have first estimated the intrinsic probability of the recorded event. It is in making that estimate as regards each story of the miraculous that our sense of fitness comes into play"¹⁹⁴.

Concluding his discussion he cites his criterion: "The criterion which both parties are actually using is that of fitness. More than half the disbelief in miracles that exists is based on a sense of their unfitness: a conviction (due, as I have argued, to false philosophy) that they are unsuitable to the dignity of God or Nature

or else to the indignity and insignificance of man"¹⁹⁵.

Conybeare, making an attempt to create a closer relationship between miracles and the truths they authenticate, and citing the very necessity of miracles says that miracles are like seals on a document, or like the sounds we utter in relation to the meaning of our speech. It is the application of miracles which gives them their significance"¹⁹⁶.

Butler discussing the probability of miracles in his *Analogy of Religion*, 1736, opines that there is no presumption against miracles as to render them incredible, but "that, on the contrary, our being able to discern reasons for them gives a positive credibility to the history of them..... God's miraculous interpositions may have been all along, in like manner, by general laws of wisdom ... we see distinct particular reasons for miracles to afford mankind instruction additional to that of nature, and to attest the truth of it and this gives a real, credibility to the supposition, that it might be part of the original plan of things, that there should be miraculous interpositions"¹⁹⁷. Dr. Lawton, discussing the weighing of historical probabilities of Gospel miracles, states: "A miracle, of course, is a peculiar case, because its most obvious characteristic is its physical non-confirmity, which raises many peculiar problems of evidence. But a miracle wrought in the context of revelation must have as its breath of life some special significance for man ; and this significance may turn out to be a factor even in the apprehension of the evidence for the outward event itself"¹⁹⁸.

Thomas Richard Miles, in his book "Religion and the Scientific Outlook", refuting the materialistic point of view, cites an illustration :

"Let us suppose that a young sailor, whom we will call Sindbad, had been born at sea, and had lived all his life on one particular ship without ever having come near land. One day he heard the captain of the ship using the word 'shore'. On being told what this word meant, Sindbad shook his head in a puzzled way, and said 'Nothing exists except sea'. Now the captain was a person who did not like ignorance to go unchecked, and he was seriously worried about the limitations of Sindbad's view point. "Sea is not the only thing that exists", he said. "There is shore as well. It is a wonderful place full of excitement ; indeed there are things to do on shore far more exciting than the things you do in your humdrum life on the ship. I quite appreciate that this may sound strange to you, since you have had no experience of the shore. But do not be narrow-minded. Have faith, and believe in something for which, here and now, there is no direct evidence"¹⁹⁹.

Discussing 'Miracles' he states :

"It has often been supposed that modern science forces us to reject all miracle stories as false. I shall argue that it is not.....No one has the

right to deny that wonderful events——events which are remarkable, and which surprise us——happen from time to time”²⁰⁰.

Commenting on “Law of Nature”, he opines :

“The word ‘law’ in many ways is misleading. It suggests that God lived up all the atoms and said to them, ‘You behave in this way, or else.....’ This implies a parallelism between ‘laws’ of a country which certainly does not hold. A very powerful monarch can hold the laws of his country in suspension when he chooses ; to speak of God doing this to the laws of nature in sheer confusion”²⁰¹.

Answering the objection that the notion of “supernatural interference” (with the natural laws) involves a vacuous explanation which should be excluded from our vocabulary altogether, he says : “The crucial point however, is this. Even if we rule out the miraculous by definition, it does not follow that the so called ‘miracles’ of the gospel story, or any other alleged miracles, did not occur. It follows only that such events if they did occur, should not be labelled ‘miracles’. To determine whether a particular event did or did not occur the scientist (and the historian) are dependent the whole time on empirical evidence. If an event is well attested, then the occurrence does not fit in with existing ideas, then these existing ideas require to be modified. To argue that an event could not have happened cuts very little ice if the evidence shows that it did happen”²⁰²

Miles supports his idea with an illustration :

“I was told the following story recently by a laundryman. He had been accused, in fact wrongly, by a hotel manager of failing to return some sheets to the hotel after laundering. The hotel manager had said that the sheets must be at the laundry, since they were not at the hotel. The laundryman replied, ‘I dare say they must, but they are not’. Similarly, if a miracle is sufficiently well-attested, a scientifically minded observer might feel like commenting ‘I dare say it couldn’t have happened, but it did’”²⁰³.

Miles, after citing various arguments to prove the credibility of miracles, concludes :

“They might agree that these events were improbable in the sense of being exceptions to otherwise well established laws ; but they would insist, none the less, that these events (or some of them) did in fact take place as described. The only way in which this view can be called in question is by challenging the adequacy of the evidence. In that case, however, each miracle story must be considered on its merits and in relation to our assessment of the gospel narrative as a whole. There is no justification for saying

that science demands unconditional rejection of all of them''²⁰⁴.

Buswell, discussing the philosophies of F.R. Tennant presents him defending the miraculous as such : "Tennant dissolves the significance of miracle in hydro-flouric acid so strong as to dissolve his entire test tube of empirical reasoning in the process''²⁰⁵.

He quotes Tennant as follows :

"Immanence.....may find expression.....in sporadic creative activity which miracle involves when it is conceived as the production of effects such as could not emerge out of the unassisted potencies of the world elements themselves. Whether such supernatural 'miracula' as distinct from natural 'mirabilia' have ever been forthcoming is a question which does not admit of a certain answer, because our knowledge of the intrinsic potencies of nature is not exhaustive ; consequently alleged miracles can never have the evidential value that theology used to ascribe, to them, or be co-ercive proofs of the exercise of immediate divine activity''²⁰⁶.

The quotations from his book on miracle are given below to illumine his point of view :

"We may note in passing that Hume, who.....did not scruple in his essay on miracles to assume the uniformity of Nature as if it were an a 'piori' principle, was too shrewd to try to prove its universality. His less cautious disciple, J.S. Mill, was, however, as audacious in zeal to prove as the master had been upon occasion, to assume''²⁰⁷.

"If induction be not the same as deduction from proved premises, but is a calculus of probability we cannot exclude the unlikely or the supra-normal as impossible or unworthy of all credence. If the principle of uniformity be not rational, belief in miracle is not irrational''²⁰⁸

Science, as well as religious faith, is at bottom the substantiation of things hoped for, the pragmatic evidencing of things not seen²⁰⁹.

"Experience up to date, one may observe, is equally opposed to the new discovery of science as to the miraculous asserted by religion''²¹⁰.

But still for Tennant, no particular act of God could have any evidential significance, for :

"If an exception to a law turns-up, whether it be the behaviour of radium or the resuscitation of the dead to life, we must, if we can, widen the law to include abnormal case''²¹¹.

The wonder, therefore, cannot be used to prove theistic or Christian revelation in the sense of affording rigorous demonstration of doctrine.

"The ultimate causation of an event is in all cases something inscrutable to sensory perception, something over and above the mere occurrence or presentation of the event and something interpretatively read into it rather than inferred from it"²¹².

"But unfortunately, in the case of the subject with which we have been especially concerned, reference to indubitable fact or two any datum which opponents can accept in common, is an impossibility. I conclude hence that all discussion of the antecedent probability of miracle is futile"²¹³.

Further three series of miracles are mentioned :

"The first is said to have occurred (1) when the church in the sense of the visible group of worshippers of God, had sunk into slavery and forgotten God's name. Moses was the religious leader with whom the first series of miracles was traditionally connected. (2) The second is alleged to have come when "the church" had begun to hyphenate the name of God with the name of other polytheistic Baals or Lords, Elisha and Elijah were the traditional leaders during the series of miracles. (3) The third, it is claimed came when the church was dominated by formalism and legalism, with little regard to the ethieal and spiritual attitude of the heart. This was the series of miracles said to have taken place at the time of Christ and the apostles"²¹⁴.

Hume is the notorious opponent of the concept of miracle. Much energy has been spent in refuting his argument to prove the credibility of the miracle. Mr. A.E. Taylor, in his lecture "David Hume and the Miraculous" which he delivered in University of Cambridge, comments on Hume's essay on Miracles :

"Historically, this essay is interesting by reason of the scandal it created, and was perhaps intended by its author to create"²¹⁵.

The suggestion of Hume's learned editor, Mr. Selly Bigge, also confirms this idea. He supposes that "the philosopher's motive in the assault was a simple craving for notoriety at any cost"²¹⁶.

Further comments are given below to prove the same contention :

"If only one half of this condemnation of all anticipations of the course of things as alike unintelligent is actually expressed in the essay, the reason must be that notoriety was to be got by an attack on the Church, an attack on the Royal Society would pass unregarded"²¹⁷.

The reaction of his this attack was :

"... in the main, he owes the admiration of modern "anti-clericals", who have regarded him as a hero of militant 'free thought'"²¹⁸.

Further, it is claimed that Hume's attack was made purposely, and he was above everything else determined that he would be talked about²¹⁹.

Commenting on the laws of nature as conceived by Hume, he says :

"Properly speaking, there are no laws of nature to be violated, but there are habits of expectation which any of us, as a fact, finds himself unable to break through"²²⁰.

A.E. Taylor presents the true concept of miracle :

"The real issue, in the case of "miracles" appealed to as of significance for religion, is not the bare antecedent probability of unusual events. The unusual event gets its significance as a "miracle" in the religious sense of the word, from the conviction that it is an event in which the character of a divine purpose underlying the whole course of events becomes exceptionally, transparent ; it is a "sign" of the mercy, the justice, the power of God"²²¹.

Professor William Norman Brown, Professor of Sanskrit, in the University of Pennsylvania in 1928, who has tried to prove relationship between the Indian and the Christian legends of miracles concludes :

"Here then we rest over case. The miracle of walking on the water, as it appears in Indian and Christian texts, originated in India, where its roots are found in the Rigveda before 800 B.C. There is part of the larger theme of crossing water magically, which is invariably illustrated by having the water grow shallow, or by walking upon its surface, or by flying across it. The miracle is due to the favour of God or of the Buddha, to the magic power of truth, or to the exercise of the psychic power of levitation. The ways in which the miracle is effected are interchangeable, and so too are the means. The Indian stories were carried to Syria, presumably by Buddhists, where though strangers they were so well received that at the time when legends were beginning to cluster around the name of Jesus some of them were attached to this figure"²²².

The net result of this research is pointed out as such :

"The story of Jesus walking on the water is possibly a reflection of the story of the Buddha's conversion of the Kasyapas. Much stronger is the case for an Indian origin of the legend, concerning Peter, which may convincingly be derived from a story of which one example is the introduction to Jataka 190...With only a few minor variations, due to natural change environment, the story concerning Peter reproduces that of the Buddhist lay disciple.

This theory, as supported by the evidence available, provides a reasonable explanation of the New Testament Legends ; otherwise none is at hand''²²³.

8. THE REINTERPRETATION OF MIRACLES

As we have seen in the preceding chapter an urge was found even among the churchmen themselves to harmonize the interpretation of miracles with the needs of scientific knowledge. There was a gradual development in the newly adopted idea which came to a climax in the late 19th century, Dr. Lawton illumines its history :

Until late in the 19th century, the numbers of English churchmen to embrace the new critical views on scripture was quite small. Milman's History of the Jews, 1829, in which he pleaded that the Biblical history should be treated scientifically, was regarded as but one example of the contemporary Godlessness, which had a few years previously led Bishop Van Mildest in his Boyle Lectures to ask whether the end of the world might not be close at hand. Dean Stanley built his History of the Jewish Church upon Ewald's History of the People of Israel, which began to appear in 1843. He treated the pre-Mosaic narratives as mythical, and the crossing of the Red Sea as Historical but non-miraculous²²⁴. These writers, however, were regarded as the extreme liberals of their day ; and the receptions accorded to Essays and Reviews, Colens's work on the Pentateuch, and Robertson Smith's essay on the Bible in the 9th edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1887, give some idea of the long struggle for the recognition of this field of enquiry''²²⁵.

Apologetic attempts to harmonize the Biblical stories with the scientific findings still went on :

"The study of the Old Testament Scripture as historical documents led inevitably to the examination of the character and evidence of their miracle stories, and to the comparison of them with general semitic beliefs. Several miracle stories were at once deemed to be poetic and literary : the story of the sun standing still at Beth-horon belonged to the same form of thought as the stars fighting against Siscra ; whilst the Book of Jonah was a satire on Israel's failure to respond to its vocation. A large number of stories were recognized as illustrations of folk-explanations of natural phenomena, topographical features or ritual. In the miracles recounted of Elijah and Elisha, there were features reminiscent of primitive magic, whilst the cycle of miracles surrounding the Exodus might be assumed to be abnormal natural occurrences''²²⁶.

The miracle was given sometimes strange definition and reinterpretation :

"The miracles were a manifestation of God's will to restore nature's true ends.

So we see our Lord "walking on the stormy waves, or quelling the menace of the sea with His word ; incorporating in these acts the deliverance of man from the rebellious powers of nature, which had risen up against Him". Similarly, on the multiplying of the loaves : "The original course of sin was the curse of barrenness but here this curse is removed, and in its stead, the primeval abundance for a moment reappears"²²⁷.

New meanings were given to the story of Cana :

"In the story of Cana there is nothing that we usually associate with the idea of miracle ; No effort to produce a sensation, nor was the act done to produce conviction. But Christ "manifested forth his glory"—He proclaimed the universe to be His own realm, and blessed the marriage as a fundamental part of this order"²²⁸.

Christ's miracles of healing were interpreted quite in a new way : attempts are made to bring the understanding of miracles into an intelligible relationship with the living faith of believe,

"In the cure of the nobleman's son, Jesus blessed the relationship of father and son ; whilst the restoring of sight to the blind man represents Christ's bringing light which enters into men and condemns them"²²⁹.

Further attempts to probe the significance of each particular miracle are made : Westcott's reinterpretations are noteworthy :

"The turning of water into wine——"Christ the source of joy", the feeding of the multitudes——"Christ the source of sustenance". The walking on the sea——"Christ the source of strength"²³⁰.

The "miracles of providence" are interpreted quite in a new manner :

"The first miracūlous draught of fish——The formation of the outward church ;
The stilling of the storm——"The defence of the church from without ;
The coin in the fish's mouth——"The support of church from within",
The second draught of fish——"The church of the future"²³¹.
Thus, "We see the perils, may even the schims, of the outward church, imaged in sinking ships, and breaking nets"²³².

Applying this sort of interpretation to the appearances of Christ after the Resurrection, Westcott uses the same principles : "The various appearances each show something of the way in which Christ's presence is offered and realized. The Gospels supplement one another in their discrepations of the risen Christ. St. Luke shows the signs of His abiding humanity ; St. John, the signs of His Majesty. In this composite witness we have the assurance of

Christ's personal Resurrection, that He was wholly changed yet wholly the same"²³³.

He further says :

"In the Ascension, the physical elevation was a parable, the change involved being primarily one of state : but "from the necessities of our human condition, the spiritual change was represented sacramentally, so to speak, in an outward form". This view that the bodily Resurrection and Ascension took place for man's sake is integral to the reinterpretation of miracle"²³⁴.

Dr. Lawton, discussing interpretations cited by Westcott concludes :

"As the 19th century proceeded, a picture was gradually assuming shape in the minds of many educated Europeans : that of the non-miraculous "Jesus of History". It was thus necessary for orthodoxy to reassert both sides of its own equation : the religion of grace, and the supernatural Christ. He who had performed such acts as are recorded of Him could alone work the moral miracle of regeneration"²³⁵.

The necessity to interpret miracles according to the order of nature was felt to be a must :

"The insuperable difficulties in the way of admitting the reality of miracles, however, have driven the great majority of continental, as well as very much English, theologians who still pretend to a certain orthodoxy, either to explain the miracles of the Gospel naturally, or to suppress them altogether. Since Schleiermacher²³⁶ denounced the idea of Divine interruptions of the order of nature, and explained away the supernatural character of miracles, by defining them as merely relative : miracles to us, but in reality mere anticipations of human knowledge and power, his example has been more or less followed throughout Germany, and almost every expedient has been adopted, by would be orthodox writers, to reduce or altogether eliminate the miraculous elements"²³⁷.

Ewald, one of the most profound scholars, but at the same time, arbitrary critic, of that time, in his great work "Geschichte des Volkes Israel", rejects the supernatural from all the "miracles" of the Old Testament"—He deliberately repudiates the miraculous birth of Jesus, rejects the supernatural from the birth of John the Baptist, and denies the relationship between him and Jesus. The miraculous events as the Crucifixion are mere poetical imaginations. The Resurrection is the creation of the pious longing and excited feeling of the disciples, and the Ascension, its natural sequel. In regard to the miracles of Jesus, his treatment of disease was principally mental and by the exercise of moral influence on the mind of the sick,

but he also employed external means, inquired into the symptoms of disease, and his action was subject to the laws of Divine order. Ewald spiritualizes the greater miracles until the physical basis is almost completely lost——The miraculous feeding of 5000 is a narrative based on some tradition of an occasion in which Jesus, "With the smallest external means, but infinitely more through his spirit and word and prayer, satisfied all who came to him"——an allegory in fact of the higher satisfying power of the bread of life——which in course of time grew to the consistency of a physical miracle. The raising of the son of the widow of Nain is represented as a case of suspended animation. In his latest work "Die Lehre der Bible Von Gott", Ewald eliminates all the miraculous elements from Revelation, which he extends to all historical religions (with the exception of Mahometanism) as well as to the religion of the Bible"²³⁸. The hold and impression of Reason and Rationalism was so strong, specially on educated persons who were fully aware of the material scientific progress that :

"The results of scientific inquiry and of Biblical criticism have created widespread doubt regarding the most material part of Christianity as a Divine Revelation. The mass of intelligent men in England are halting between two opinions, and standing in what seems to us the most unsatisfactory position conceivable : they abandon, before a kind of Vague and indefinite, if irresistible, conviction, some of the most central supernatural doctrines of Christianity ; they try to spiritualize or dilute the rest into a form which does not shock their reason ; and yet they cling to the delusion, that they still retain the consolation and the hope of truths which, if not divinely revealed, are mere human speculation regarding matters beyond reason. They have, in fact, as little warrant to abandon the one part as they have to retain the other. They built their house upon the sand, and the waves which have already carried away so much may any day engulf the rest"²³⁹.

The same effects and trends had crept, and made their way even, into the Church itself :

"The prevalent characteristic of popular theology in England, at this time, may be said to be a tendency to eliminate from Christianity, with thoughtless dexterity, every supernatural element which does not quite accord with current opinion, and yet to ignore the fact that, in so doing, ecclesiastical christianity has practically been altogether abandoned. This tendency is fostered with profoundly illogical zeal by many distinguished men within the Church itself, who endeavour to assert for a moment the pursuing wolves of doubt and unbelief which press upon it, by practically throwing to them,

scrap by scrap, the doctrines which constitute the claims of Christianity to be regarded as a Divine Revelation at all. The moral Christianity which they hope to preserve, noble though it be, has not one feature left to distinguish it as a miraculously communicated religion"²⁴⁰.

These were the materialistic trends prevailing in England, when a bold and daring contribution towards the establishment of truth, even at the cost of doctrines of Christianity itself, was considered a necessity :

"It is poor honour to sequester a creed from healthy handling, or to shrink from the serious examination of its doctrines. That which is true in Religion cannot be shaken ; that which is false no one can desire to preserve"²⁴¹.

FOOT NOTES

1. Ency. of Religion & Religions p. 271.
2. A Dictionary of Philosophy, edited by M. Rosenthal and P. Yudin, Moscow, 1967, p. 307.
3. Miracles & Revelation, London, 1959, p. 11.
4. *ibid.*, p. 12.
5. *ibid.*, p. 44.
6. *ibid.*
7. *ibid.*, p. 44 Cf. Lecky, History of Rationalism, Vol. I, p. 165.
8. *ibid.*, p. 45.
9. *ibid.*, p. 16.
10. The Supernatural ; its origion, Nature and Evolution, New York, 1892, vol. II, p. 259.
11. Supernatural Religion, published by Longmans, Green & Co., London, 4th ed., 1874, vol., I, Preface.
12. *ibid.*
13. John H. King, The Supernatural : Its Origin, Nature and Evolution, New York, 1892, Vol, II, p. 235.
14. *ibid.*, pp., 272-273.
15. *ibid.*, p. 205.
16. *ibid.*, p. 202.
17. J. B. Mozley, B. D. Bampton lecturer in 1865 "On Miracles", 2nd ed., 1867, p. 6f. cf. also Supernatural Religion, vol. I, p. 3.
18. Supernatural Religion, vol. I, p. 7, cf. also Bampton Lectures for 1865, p. 23.
19. Supernatural Religion, p. 4, cf. also. A view of the Evidence of Christianity, Preporatory considerations, p. 12.
20. *ibid.*, p. 5. cf. also Replies to Essays and Reviews, 1862, p. 151.
21. *ibid.*, p. 6, cf. also Aids to Faith, 4th ed., 1863, p. 35.
22. *ibid.*, p. 8, cf. also Aids to Faith, 1863, p. 3.
23. John Henry Cardinal Newman, Two Essays on Biblical and on Eccleiaistical Miracles, Longmans, Green & Co., 39, Paternorter Row, London, New York, Bombay and Calcutta, 1911, p. 7, cf, 2nd ed., 1870, p. 6.
24. Anne Mozley, Letters and Correspondents of John Henry Newman, London, 1891, p. 101.
25. Two Essays, 1911, p. 11.
26. *ibid.*, p. 12.
27. Supernatural Religion, p. 10. cf. The Gospel of Resccurrection, 3rd ed., 1874. p. 34.
28. Supernatural Religion, p. 8, cf. Aids to faith, 1863, p. 4.
29. Supernatural Religion. p. 9, cf. Bampton Lectures for 1865, p. 211.
30. Supernatural Religion, p. 9, cf. Replies to "Essays and Reviews", 1862, p. 143.
31. *ibid.*, p. 10, cf., The Gospel of the Resurrection, 3rd ed., 1874, p. 34.
32. *ibid.*, p. 205, cf., Bampton Lectures, p. 27.
33. *ibid.*, p. 46, cf. Bampton Lectures, p. 23.
34. *ibid.*, p. 34, cf., Some Elements of Religion, Lent Lectures, 1870, 1872, p. 74f.
35. *ibid.*, p. 37, cf., Aids to Faith, p. 19.
36. *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 478.
37. (a) Cf. Matt., vii, 22. 23.
(b) Cf. Marks, xiii, 22, "For false Christs and false prophets shall arise and shall work signs and wonders to seduce, if it were possible even the elect".

- (c) Cf. Matt. xii, 27, 28.
 (d) Cf. Marks, ix, 38-40.
38. *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 153.
 39. Spinoza, Baruch or Benedict (1632-77, Dutch materialist philosopher, excommunicated for his free thinking by the Jewish community of Amstradam. He built his teaching on nature. In defiance of the dualism of Descartes, he maintained that only nature existed, being the cause of itself and needing nothing else for its being. (Dict. of Phil. p. 428).
 40. *Supernatural Religion*, Vol. I, p. 15.
 41. *ibid.*, p. 207.
 42. *ibid.*, p. 208,
 43. *ibid.*, p. 206.
 44. *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 486.
 45. *Supernatural Religion*, Vol. I, p. 324.
 46. *ibid.*, p. 325.
 47. Matt. xii, 27, cf. Luke, xi-19, IX, 49 ; Acts, XiX. 13.
 48. *Supernatural Religion*, Vol. I, p. 117.
 49. *ibid.*
 50. *ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 479.
 51. *Supernatural Religion*, Vol. I, p. 197.
 52. *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 480.
 53. *ibid.*, p. 491.
 54. *ibid.*, p. 492.
 55. Lecky, *History of Rationalism*, Vol. I, p. 1.
 56. *ibid.*, Introduction.
 57. Hobbes, Thomas (1588-1679), English materialist philosopher ; his philosophy was influenced by the English 17th century bougeois revolution. In his opinion God is no more than a figment of the imagination. (In his doctrine on knowledge he attacks Descartes' theory of innate ideas. Inferring all ideas from sensations, he develops the teaching on the elaboration of ideas by comparison, combination and division (Dic. of Phil., p. 194).
 58. Bacon, Francis, (1561-1626), English Philosopher, founder of the new materialism and experimental science. In his opinion, "Learning should be a rational elaboration of the facts of experience". He evolved his own materialistic concept of nature (Dic. of Phil., p. 44).
 59. Lecky, *History of Rationalism*, Vol. I, pp. 109-111.
 60. *ibid.*
 61. *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 144.
 62. *ibid.*, pp. 181-182.
 63. William Edward Hartpole Lecky : *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, London, 1904 (First printed in 1865)., Vol. I, p. 157.
 64. Locke, John (1632-1704), English materialist Philosopher...In his major work *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1690) he developed the theory of knowledge of materialist empiricism, which had been complicated by the nominatism of Hobbes and the rationalism of Descartes. Locke declared experience to be the sole source of all ideas. (Dict. of Phil., p. 246).
 65. King, *Life of Locke*, Vol. I, pp. 230-231, Cf. Lecky, *History of Rationalism*, Vol. I, p. 157.
 66. Hume, David (1711-76) English idealist philosopher, psychologist, historian. For him the only subject of authentic knowledge is that of mathematics. All other objects of study concern facts which cannot be proved logically and can only be deducted from experience...

One of the fundamental relation of cause and effect. However he denies the objective character of casuality. In the Philosophy of religion he confined himself to the admission that the causes of the order in the universe have some analogy with reason but denied all the theological and philosophical doctrines of God, and turning to historical experience he acknowledged the evil influence of religion on morality and civil life (Dict. of Phil, pp. 197-98).

67. Nelson's Ency., London, 1952, p. 341.
68. David Hume, "Enquiries concerning the Human Understanding", edited by L. A. Selby, Bigge, II, ed., Oxford, 1893, p. 110.
69. *ibid.*, p. 111.
70. *ibid.*, p. 113.
71. *ibid.*
72. *ibid.*, p. 114.
73. An allusion to the event of Resurrection of Jesus is made.
74. *ibid.*, p. 128.
75. *ibid.*, p. 116.
76. *ibid.*, p. 116.
77. *ibid.*, p. 117.
78. *ibid.*, p. 119.
79. *ibid.*
80. *ibid.*, p. 122.
81. *ibid.*, p. 127.
82. *ibid.*, p. 129., cf. Richardson quoting the author of *Ecce Homo*: "That a man possesses a strange power which I can not understand, is no reason why I should receive his words as divine oracles of "Truth". (5th ed., 1892, p. 45), cf. *The Miracle Stories of the Gospels*, London, 1941, p. 22.
83. *ibid.*, p. 130.
84. *ibid.*, p. 131.
85. Dic. of Phil., p. 142.
86. Immanuel Kant : *Religion Within the limits of Reason Alone*, New York, 1960, p. ix.
87. *ibid.*, p. X.
88. *ibid.*
89. *ibid.*, p. XI.
90. *ibid.*, p. XXXVIII.
91. *ibid.*, p. 48.
92. *ibid.*
93. *ibid.*, p. 80.
94. *ibid.*, p. 49.
95. *ibid.*, p. 81.
96. There seems to be an allusion to Abraham sacrificing his beloved son.
97. Kant, *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, p. 82.
98. *ibid.*, p. 150.
99. *ibid.*, p. 175.
100. *ibid.*, p. 182.
101. *ibid.*, p. 120.
102. *ibid.*, p. 122.
103. *ibid.*, pp. 79-82.

104. *ibid.*, p. 121.
105. *ibid.*, p. CXXXIV.
106. Fellow and tutor of Trinity College and Professor of Ancient History in the University of Dublin, in 1889.
107. Kant's Critical Philosophy by J. P. MAHAFFY, D. D., and J. H. Bernard, D. D., London, 1889, p. vii.
108. *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 389.
109. Irwin, One volume Bible commentary, p. 6.
110. *ibid.*
111. *ibid.*
112. Alan Richardson, The Miracle Stories of the Gospels, London, 1941, p. 34.
113. *ibid.*
114. *ibid.*, p. 124.
115. *ibid.*, p. 125.
116. *ibid.*, p. 126.
117. *ibid.*, p. 127.
118. *ibid.*, p. 128.
119. *ibid.*, p. 135.
120. *ibid.*, p. 130.
121. John Stewart Lawton, Miracles and Revelation, London, 1959, p. 46.
122. *ibid.*, p. 47.
123. *ibid.*
124. In this work his attempt is made to prove that there was a general corruption of the gospels in the sixth century (Leyland, letter VII).
125. *ibid.*, p. 48.
126. John Leland, D. D., A View of the Principal Deistical Writers that have appeared in England in the last and present century, 1754, p. 68.
127. *ibid.*, p. 69.
128. *ibid.*, p. 73.
129. Dr. Lawton, Miracles and Revelation, p. 48.
130. *ibid.*, p. 49.
131. Dr. Leland, History of Rationalism, p. 82.
132. *ibid.*
133. Dr. Lawton, Miracles and Revelation, p. 51.
134. Leland, Deistical Writers, p. 157.
135. *ibid.*, p. 157.
136. *ibid.*, p. 167.
137. Dr. Lawton, Miracles and Revelation, p. 52.
138. *ibid.*, p. 55.
139. Leland, Deistical Writers, p. 209.
140. *ibid.*, p. 295.
141. Dr. Lawton, Miracles and Revelation, p. 55.
142. *ibid.*, p. 58.
143. *ibid.*, p. 59, cf. also p. XXXII.
144. *ibid.*, p. 60.

145. Nature, Utility of Religion and Theism, by J. S. Mill, 3rd ed., London, MDCCCLXXIV, p. 120.
146. Dr. Lawton, Miracles and Revelation, p. 60.
147. Ibid., p. 9.
148. ibid., pp. 9-14.
149. ibid., p. 26.
150. ibid., p. 12.
151. ibid., p. 13.
152. ibid., p. 81.
153. ibid., p. 94.
154. ibid., p. 96.
155. ibid., p. 97, cf., Oman, The Philosophy of the Sciences, p. 86. He writes: "All problems became historical. Scientific explanations were on account how things came to be; philosophy was largely a theory of history; religion seemed to be at the mercy of critical historical questions, and there was an active school which taught that all its problems could be determined wholly on grounds of historical evolution. But a historical scheme constantly turns out to be merely what we might call an illustrated edition of the Cartesian method".
156. ibid., p. 81.
157. ibid., p. 82, cf. also Lecky, History of Rationalism, pp. 156-158.
158. ibid., p. 82.
159. ibid., pp. 98-99.
160. ibid., p. 103.
161. ibid., pp. 94-95, cf., also J. B. Bury, Selected Essays ed. H. W. V. G., Temperley 1930, p. 23.
162. ibid., p. 95.
163. ibid., p. 133, cf., Essays and Reviews 1860, 5th ed., p. 97. Prof. Powell says: "When a reference is made to matters of external fact (insisted on as such) it is obvious that reason and intellect can alone be the proper judges of the evidence of such facts".
164. ibid., p. 83.
165. ibid., p. 84, cf., Mill's own three Essays on Nature, the Utility of Religion and Theism, He says that Religion should be tested scientifically to see what it can offer that science can recognize, (p. 128 f).
166. ibid., p. 84. "It is indispensable that the subject of religion should from time to time be reviewed as a strictly scientific question, and that its evidences should be tested by the same scientific methods, and on the same principles as those of any of the speculative conclusions drawn by physical science". (Nature & Utility of Religion and Theism, by J. S. Mill, London, MDCCCLXXIV 1874).
167. ibid., p. 100, cf., also Glazelrock, Faith of a modern churchman, p. 68.
168. ibid., p. 91.
169. ibid., p. 101, Cf., Hellenism & Christianity by Edwyn Bevan, 1921, p. 233.
170. ibid., p. 103.
171. ibid.,
172. C. S. Lewis, Miracles, London, 1947, p. 115.
173. Lawton, Miracles and Revelation, pp. 86-87. Cf., also Essays & Reviews 5th ed., p. 109.
174. ibid., p. 87. Cf., also Essays & Reviews, p. 142.
175. C. S. Lewis, Miracles, pp. 19-20.
176. ibid., p. 20.

177. *ibid.*, p. 17.
178. *ibid.*
179. *ibid.*, p. 116.
180. Lawton, *Miracles and Revelation*, p. 42.
181. Lewis, *Miracles*, p. 117.
182. Lawton, *Miracles and Revelation*, p. 90.
183. Lewis, *Miracles*, p. 118.
184. *ibid.*, p. 71.
185. *ibid.*, p. 72.
186. Lawton, *Miracles and Revelation*, p. 55.
187. *ibid.*, p. 56.
188. *ibid.*, p. 57.
189. *ibid.*, p. 92., cf., Tennant, pp 41-54.
190. C. S. Lewis, *Miracles*, p. 121.
191. *ibid.*, p. 123.
192. *ibid.*, pp. 123-124.
193. *ibid.*, p. 125.
194. *ibid.*, p. 129.
195. *ibid.*, p. 129.
196. Lawton, *Miracles and Revelation*, pp. 37-38. Cf., J. Conybeare, *A Defence of Revealed Religion*, 1732, p. 427.
197. *ibid.*, pp. 42-43., cf., Butler, *Analogy of Religion*, pp. 160-161.
198. *ibid.*, p. 165.
199. T. R. Miles, *Religion and the Scientific Outlook*, London, 1959, p. 69.
200. *ibid.*, p. 189.
201. *ibid.*, p. 191.
202. *ibid.*, p. 191-192.
203. *ibid.*, p. 192.
204. *ibid.*, p. 194.
205. *The philosophies of F. R. Tennant and John Dewey*, by J. Oliver Buswell, New York, 1950, p. 240.
206. *ibid.*, p. 240, cf., *Philosophical Theology*, p. 215.
207. *ibid.*, p. 241, cf., *Miracle and its Philosophical presuppositions*, Cambridge University Press, p. 14.
208. *ibid.*, p. 241, cf., *ibid.*, p. 18.
209. *ibid.*, cf., *ibid.*, p. 21.
210. *ibid.*, cf., *ibid.*, p. 83.
211. *ibid.*, cf., *ibid.*, p. 22.
212. *ibid.*, cf., *ibid.*, p. 67.
213. *ibid.*, cf., *ibid.*, p. 88.
214. *ibid.*
215. *Philosophical Studies*, by A. E. Taylor, London, 1934, p. 330.
216. *ibid.*, p. 332.
217. *ibid.*, p. 335.
218. *ibid.*, p. 331.
219. *ibid.*, p. 349.

220. *ibid.*, p. 349.
221. *ibid.*, p. 359.
222. *The Indian and Christian Miracles of Walking on the water*, by William Norman Brown, London, 1928, p. 69.
223. *ibid.*, p. 70.
224. See the modern Muslim Indian interpreters of the Holy Quran, explaining this event on the same ground.
225. Lawton, *Miracles and Revelation*, p. 99.
226. *ibid.*, p. 103.
227. *ibid.*, p. 155. Cf. Trench, R. C. "Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord" 1846, p. 33.
228. *ibid.*, p. 156, cf., Maurice, J. F. D. "Discourses on Johns Gospel 1857, p. 73.
229. *ibid.*, p. 156, cf., *ibid.*, pp. 140, 273, 176.
230. *ibid.*, p. 157, cf., *Characteristics of the Gospel Miracles*, 1859, p. 10.
231. *ibid.*, cf., *ibid.*, pp., 20-21.
232. *ibid.*, cf., *ibid.*, p. 23.
233. *ibid.*, p. 158, cf. *The Revelation of the Risen Lord*, 1881, p. 68.
234. *ibid.*, cf., *ibid.*, p. 180.
235. *ibid.*, p. 158.
236. "Schleiermacher, Friedrich Ernst Daniel (1768-1834), German Protestant theologian and philosopher. He was for many years a preacher, a professor at the University of Berlin. His views are a combination of the ideas of Spinoza, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Jacobi and others— He further developed the criticism of the O. T. as begun by Spinoza—His ideas stimulated further criticism of all the sources of Christianity" (Dict. of Philosophy, p. 400).
237. *Supernatural Religion*, Vol. I, pp. 27-28.
238. *ibid.*, pp. 28-29.
239. *ibid.*, p. XV.
240. *ibid.*, p. XIV.
241. *ibid.*, Preface.

CHAPTER V

IMPACT OF MODERN WESTERN THOUGHT AND SCIENCE ON MUSLIM RELIGIOUS THOUGHT—THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE INTERPRETATION OF THE QURAN, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO THE MIRACLES MENTIONED IN THE QURAN—VARIOUS SCHOOLS OF MUFASSIRIN AND THEIR ATTEMPTS AT REINTERPRETATION AND ASSESSMENT OF MIRACLES IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN THOUGHT—EXAMPLES OF THEIR INTERPRETATION

As has been explained in detail in the preceding chapter, there were materialistic trends prevailing all round in the Western World and how in the battle between science and religion fought in Europe, science won and religion lost one ground after another. There is no need for further discussion here on this subject. The point of investigation in this chapter is what the effect of modern Western thought and scientific knowledge was on Muslim religious thought, and how it caused the new interpretations suggested by contemporary muslim authors.

Mr. Baljon, discussing that the need of the interpretaion of Holy Quran was felt soon after the death of the Holy Prophet P B U.H., and tracing the impact of Hellenism in commentries of scholars like Fakhr al-Din al-Razi observes that no impact was ever greater than the impact of Western thought :

“But none of the earlier unpleasant confrontations with uncongenial cultures and philosophical systems Islam had been faced with, was to be compared to the crises occasioned by the encounter with the enlightened and more or less secularised Europe of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. No longer could be the matter be settled by a few legal adjustments or some reconciliatory theories in the speculative realm of thought”¹.

Mr. Baljon further considers that the very cause of the influx of Western thought on the Muslim world was mainly the political decline of the muslims :

“In politics the tables had been turned : Muslim rule was replaced by colonial dominion. In ‘religiosis’ one had no more to deal with fairly similar creeds but with directly disruptive trends hitting the heart of religion itself. And in the sphere of social life the unfeasibility of Muslim Society’s media-evel structure contrasted to the active and dynamic way of life of the Westerners became painfully evident”².

The waves of the western thought struck this subcontinent of Indo-Pak (then India) while it was under the British rule and Muslims were trying to get rid of the shackles of slavery :

“It was the Mutiny, the Sepoy-revolt in 1857, which became the decisive event for the initiation of a real reorientation of the Indian Muslims. On account of its most unfortunate direct effects on the Muslims—it completed their fear of and aversion from modern progress through the new extremely strained relations with the British it became clear to their future leader (Sir Syed) Ahmad Khan (1817-98) that his community must rapidly give up its passive and indolent attitude, if it would not court total disaster. To

this end he started a vast programme of social and educational reform after European patterns. Soon, however, he also perceived that the introduction of Western manners and norms as well as the diffusion of Western knowledge necessitated a new version of Islam in the light of contemporary thought"³.

The way of rational approach to religious issues was felt a necessity and to fulfil the same, it was necessary to give new interpretations to the Holy Quran to harmonize it with the modern progress. Though it is an admitted fact that the Holy Quran is a perfect guidance for all nations and all ages and the right way for the Muslims is to mould themselves according to the teachings of the Holy Quran and not cut the Quran according to their own needs. But under the influence of Western thought new attempts were made for the harmonization of Islamic teachings with the new ideas :

"For the Western educated youth religion had to be expressed in terms adapted to their newly acquired way of reasoning. Otherwise Islamic faith might be rejected as being obsolete and meaningless. For the prevention of this acute danger, Ahmad Khan set himself to the study of the Koran in the firm conviction that the truth it contained would be demonstrable in the spirit of any age. A six volume Koran commentary on the first 17 Sura's was the result. Thus the year of appearance of the first part: 1880 can be rightly styled the initial date of deliberate modern Muslim Koran interpretation"⁴.

Parallel 'sincere attempts to arrive at a new evaluation of Islamic principles' were made by contemporary Egyptologist theologian Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) in his work called *Risala al-Tauhid* (1897) and specimens of his Quran commentary which was further continued by his pupil Muhammad Rashid Rida, in his commentary called *al-Manar*. A similar moderate but some different method of interpretation was followed by Tantawi Jawhari (d. 1940) in his *Tafsir al-Jawahir* in 25 volumes, which in the opinion of Mr. Baljon is "a manual for the general public on biology and other sciences, accompanied with practical advice and paternal admonitions"⁵.

Such attempts are mostly seen as a result of intellectual conflict emanating from the impact of dominant alien culture in Muslim countries specially in India and Egypt because these two Muslim dominions came under the sway of colonialism. Consequently, so many commentaries of the Holy Quran saw the light. In India, as has been mentioned, that task was started by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and it was further followed by so many commentators as Abdul Hakim, Ahmad Din, Abdullah Chakralvi, Muhammad Ali, Sher Ali, Pervez, Bashiruddin Mahmud and so many

others. When we observe deeply attempts made by Sir Sayyid we are convinced by the sincerity of his purpose. He was zealous to uplift the social, economic cultural and political position of Muslims on one hand and to answer the polemics of Christianity on the other.

It was the time when Dr. Pfandar, a missionary of great renown, who had previously worked in Iran, came to India. His work "Mizan al-Haq" created a stir in Muslim circles. William Muir's "life of Mahomet" was another important book in this controversy. William Muir attacked the moral principles of Islam as incompatible with modern ideas and tried to prove that the decline of Muslims was mainly due to this very reason. Sir Sayyid to meet this challenge, wrote Essays on the Life of Muhammad (1870) in English which was later published in Urdu with many additions under the title "Al-Khutabat al-Ahmadiyya". This may be regarded a great contribution made by him.

Mr. Bashir Ahmad Dar depicts the background and justification for the re-interpretation adopted by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan in the following words :

" attempt to interpret Islam, not for the guidance of common man but for the intelligentsia of the time, was first made by the Mutazilites who had to deal with non-Muslim thinkers well versed in Greek philosophy. They accepted the tenets of this philosophy as true and tried to interpret Islam so as to make it compatible with it. To them the criterion of human reason was inviolable and, therefore, they tried to adjust several doctrines of the Quran to this philosophy. But gradually the spirit of free thought overwhelmed them and their zeal for philosophy overstepped its proper limit. Under the same category must be placed the attempts of Ibn Rushd and the authors of Ikhwan-us-Safa. They were all interested in interpreting Islam in the light of the principles of reason accepted as true in those days"⁶.

It was they, the philosophers with rationalistic approach to religion, to whom according to Mr. Dar, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan under the influence of Western thought, was attracted and consequently tried to interpret Islam according to this pattern :

"As the motive was identical, Sayyid Ahmad was naturally attracted to their mode of dealing with the problem of religion. In almost all controversial matters, he quotes the Mutazilite commentators of the Quran and Ibn Rushd in his support"⁷.

The opinions of Ibn Rushd and other theologians have been dealt with already in Chapter III, and we need not discuss them here. As Mr. Dar, himself, admitted

the fact, the philosophers overstepped their proper limit. Even then Ibn Rushd believes in the credibility of miracles and regards it a support⁸. But Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan dealt with miracles with quite different attitude. Mr. Dar himself criticizing Sir Sayyid's attitude in this connection says :

"Sayyid Ahmad erred in many respects. Imbued with the over-confidence which nineteenth century science exhibited in the sphere of knowledge, he tried to express his views with regard to subjects which he should have better left untouched. His attempt to explain away miracles and determine the nature of angels, for instance, proved too much for him"⁹.

Sir Sayyid who previously as an advocate of miracles had argued for the credibility of miracles in his Bible commentary, now under the new influence of Western scientific thought, changed his views totally regarding the miraculous. He rejected the fact of virgin birth of Jesus¹⁰ and also his ascension. He interpreted the miracles of Moses, Jesus, Abraham, Uzair, and especially the ascension of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. in such a way that all the miraculous element was negated. Ideas and arguments of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan regarding miracles are given somewhat in detail in the next pages alongwith his commentary on miracles.

Sir Sayyid was in a critical situation on the one hand he could not refute the authentic traditions narrating different miracles of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H and on the other he was zealously desirous to prove that Islam does not believe in miracles which in his opinion, are against the laws of nature. So he adopted the same argument as was cited by David Hume and said :

"واقعات خلاف قانون فطرت کے وقوع کا ثبوت اگر گواہان رویت بھی گواہی دیں تو محالات سے ہے اس لئے کہ وہ اس وقت دو دلیلیں جو ایک ہی حیثیت پر مبنی ہیں - سامنے ہوئی ہیں - ایک قانون فطرت جو ہزاروں لا کھوں تجربوں سے جیلا بعد جیل و زمانا بعد زمان ثابت ہے اور ایک گواہان رویت جن کا عادل ہونا بھی تجربہ سے ثابت ہے پس اس کا تصفیہ کرنا ہوتا ہے کہ دونوں تجربوں میں سے کون سا تجربہ ترجیح کے قابل ہے - قانون فطرت کو غلط سمجھنا یا راوی کی سمجھ اور بیان میں سہو و غلطی کا ہونا - کوئی ذی عقل تو قانون فطرت پر راوی کے بیان کو ترجیح نہیں دے سکتا - قول پیغمبر بلا حجت قابل تسلیم ہے مگر کلام تو اسی میں ہے کہ قول پیغمبر ہے یا نہیں" 11۔

He further holds that Holy Quran does not support the happening of miracles which explicitly violate the usual course of nature and this is the very reason that the Holy Prophet P B U H. did not show any miracle in his lifetime *in proof of his prophethood* :

”اسلام کو تو فخر اس بات پر ہے کہ ہمارے رسول برحق پیغمبر خدا محمد مصطفیٰ نے صاف صاف کہا دیا کہ میرے پاس تو کوئی معجزہ و عجزہ نہیں ہے۔ اگر ہوگا تو خدا کے پاس ہوگا۔ میں تو مثل تمہارے ایک آدمی ہوں۔۔۔۔ ہم کو اور اسلام کو تو اس سچے ہادی پر فخر ہے جس نے نہ لکڑی کو سانپ کر دکھایا اور نہ اپنے دست مبارک کو چمکایا نہ سچی بات پر کچھ پردہ ڈالا نہ خدا کی قدرت کو توڑنے کا دعویٰ کیا اور سیدھی طرح لوگوں کو سچا راستہ بتایا“¹²۔

Now it was easy to formulate this principle that when the greatest and last of all the prophets did not show any miracle and that miracles had nothing to do with the function of prophethood, no other miracles were ever shown by other prophets also. So he possibly minimised the miraculous element and sometime negated and refuted the same in his commentary. To trace the deep influence of Western thought on one hand and the interpretations of Sir Sayyid, on the other, on his followers, it will be very interesting to examine their commentaries comparatively. Commenting on 2 : 50 Sir Sayyid says :

”تمام مفسرین حضرت موسیٰ کے عبور اور فرعون کے غرق ہونے کو بطور ایک ایسے معجزے کے قرار دیتے ہیں جو خلاف قانون قدرت واقع ہوا ہو۔ جس کو انگریزی میں سپر نیچرل (Supernatural) کہتے ہیں اور یہ سمجھتے ہیں کہ حضرت موسیٰ نے سمندر پر اپنی لاٹھی ماری وہ پھٹ گیا اور پانی مثل دیوار یا پہاڑ کے ادھر ادھر کھڑا ہو گیا“¹³۔

Discussing the event in detail he traces the origin of miraculous interpretation of the event as much :

”اصل یہ ہے کہ یہودی اس بات کے قائل تھے کہ حضرت موسیٰ کے لاٹھی مارنے سے سمندر پھٹ گیا اور زمین نکل آئی تھی اور لاٹھی مارنے سے پتھر میں سے پانی بہ نکلا تھا۔ علماء اسلام تفسیروں میں اور خصوصاً بنی اسرائیل کے قصوں میں یہودیوں کی پیروی کرنے کے عادی تھے“¹⁴۔

Under the direct influence of refutation of supernatural and accusing all the Muslim commentators of Holy Quran to take the material from Jews he tries to reinterpret the event in a rationalistic style :

”پس صاف معنی یہ ہیں کہ خدا نے حضرت موسیٰ کو کہا کہ اپنی لاٹھی کے سہارے سے سمندر میں چل وہ پھٹا ہوا یا کھلا ہوا ہے یعنی پایاب ہو رہا ہے پس جو معجزہ تھا وہ یہی تھا کہ ایسے مشکل وقت میں سمندر کے پایاب ہونے سے خدا تعالیٰ نے موسیٰ کو اور تمام بنی اسرائیل کو فرعون کے پنجے سے بچا دیا اور جب فرعون نے پایاب اترنا چاہا تو پانی بڑھ گیا تھا۔ وہ معہ اپنے لشکر کے ڈوب گیا“¹⁵۔

He further clarifies the position and tries to prove this rescue of Israelites quite natural :

”معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ اس وقت بسبب جوار بھانٹے کے جو سمندر میں ہوتا رہتا ہے اس مقام پر کہیں خشک زمین نکل آئی تھی اور کہیں پایاب رہ جاتی تھی۔ بنی اسرائیل پایاب و خشک راستہ سے راتوں رات بامن اتر گئے۔ . . . اور وہ وقت پانی کے بڑھنے کا تھا لمحہ لمحہ میں پانی بڑھ گیا جیسے کہ اپنی عادت کے موافق بڑھتا ہے اور اور ڈباؤ ہو گیا جس میں فرعون اور اس کا لشکر ڈوب گیا“¹⁶۔

Khwaja Ahmad Din, in his comments on 2 : 50 repeats the same idea :

”تمہیں ایسے وقت میں سمندر پر پہنچایا جب کہ وہ ابھی پایاب تھا“¹⁷۔

Maulvi Muhammad Ali, in his Urdu translation of the Holy Quran cites some research and then the same echo is heard in his comments :

”دریاؤں میں یہ بسا اوقات ایسا ہو جاتا ہے کہ ایک وقت دریا پایاب ہوتا ہے اور آنا فناً ایک ایسی خطرناک رو آتی ہے کہ سیلاب آ جاتا ہے۔ . . . اور فرعون نے جوش تعاقب میں کہ بنی اسرائیل کو پکڑ لیں۔ یہ خیال نہ کیا ہو کہ رو کا پتہ لے لے“¹⁸۔

In his English version the same idea has been employed :

“The Israelites passed when the sea receded on account of the ebb, and the Egyptians were drowned because the tide was on at the time, and in their zeal to overtake the Israelites they did not care for it”¹⁹.

Mr. Bashiruddin Mahmood's comments are found on the same line of argument :

”اس وقت جوار بھانٹا کے اصول کے مطابق سمندر پیچھے ہٹ گیا اور قوم موسیٰ سمندر سے نکل گئی مگر فرعون کے لشکر کے آنے پر پانی کے لوٹنے کا وقت آ گیا اور وہ ڈوب گیا“²⁰۔

Yaqub Ali Turab also tries to justify the event on some natural ground of cause and effect :

”اصل یہی ہے کہ اس وقت ہزاروں ہزار اسباب سے مثلاً پوربی ہواؤں کے چلنے وغیرہ وغیرہ سے اللہ تعالیٰ نے اس مقام سے سمندر کو ہٹا دیا اور خشک کر دیا“²¹۔

Mr. Ghulam Ahmad Pervez repeats the same notion in his translation of 2 : 50 but somewhat in more cautious words while he renders “Bahr” meaning sea, as river :

”تاآنکہ تم اس مقام پر پہنچ گئے جہاں سامنے سمندر (یا دریا) کا حصہ تھا اور پیچھے فرعون اور اس کی فوج - تم اس طرح گھر چکے تھے کہ ہماری راہ نمائی سے تمہیں سمندر (یا دریا) میں خشک راستہ مل گیا اور اس طرح ہم نے تمہیں فرعون کے لشکر کی دستبرد سے بچا لیا اور وہ اور اس کا لشکر سب غرق ہو گئے“²²۔

”پس موسیٰ کو الہام الہی سے ایسے موقع کی اطلاع ملی اور ضرب عصا سے پانی نکل پڑا مگر یہ معنی جو ہم نے کیے ہیں کہ تو اپنی جماعت کو لے کر اس پہاڑ میں رہ پڑ۔ یا وہاں سے چل وہاں پانی کے بارہ چشمے ہیں زیادہ لطیف معلوم ہوتا ہے“²⁹۔

Mr. Bashiruddin Mahmood stresses the point that Moses was ordered to strike a particular rock :

”اپنا سوٹا فلاں پتھر پر مار“³⁰۔

Parvez explains the verse in a beautiful manner though repeating the same idea and covering all the interpretations of his precursors :

”تم اپنی تاریخ کے اس واقعہ کو بھی یاد کرو جب تمہیں پانی کی دقت ہوئی اور موسیٰ نے اس کے لئے ہم سے درخواست کی تو ہم نے اس کی راہ نمائی اس مقام کی طرف کر دی جہاں پانی کے چشمے مستور تھے . وہ اپنی جماعت کو لے کر وہاں پہنچا - چٹان پر سے مٹی ہٹائی تو اس میں سے ایک دو نہیں اکٹھے بارہ چشمے پھوٹ نکلے“³¹۔

Discussing 2 : 73 Sir Sayyid gave the verse a psychological interpretation, and negated all the miraculous element from it :

”جو لوگ در حقیقت قاتل نہیں ہیں وہ بسبب یقین اپنی بے جرمی کے ایسا کرنے میں کچھ خوف نہ کریں گے - مگر اصلی قاتل بسبب خوف اپنے جرم کو جو از روئے فطرت انسان کے دل میں اور بالتخصیص جہالت کے زمانے میں اس قسم کی باتوں سے ہوتا ہے ایسا نہیں کرنے کا اور اسی وقت معلوم ہو جائے گا اور وہی نشانیاں جو خدا نے انسان کی فطرت میں رکھی ہیں لوگوں کو دکھا دے گا - اس قسم کے حیلوں سے اس زمانے میں بھی بہت سے چور معلوم ہو جاتے ہیں“³²۔

It is very interesting to note that Maulvi Abdullah Chakralwi has copied even the wording of Sir Sayyid ; only he has further explained some words which he felt difficult for the readers :

”جو لوگ در حقیقت قاتل نہیں ہیں - وہ بسبب یقین اپنی بے جرمی کے ایسا کرنے میں کچھ خوف نہ کریں گے مگر اصل قاتل بہ سبب خوف اپنے جرم کے جو از روئے فطرت انسان کے دل میں خصوصاً جہالت کے زمانے میں اس قسم کی باتوں سے ہوتا ہے ایسا نہیں کرنے کا یا اس کے چہرے پر تغیر و تبدل ہو جائے گا یا اس کے بدن پر خصوصاً ہاتھوں میں لرزہ ظاہر ہو جائے گا - پس اسی وقت قاتل معلوم ہو جائے گا“³³۔

Khawaja Ahmad Din rationalizes the event in a different way, filling in blanks in the form of brackets :

”سو (اس نفس کو ہوش میں لانے کے لئے) ہم نے فرمایا کہ اس (نفس کے اصل جزء) کو اس (نفس) کے (دوسرے) بعض (یعنی ہاتھ پاؤں) سے مارو - اس تجویز سے (وہ نفس تھوڑی دیر کے لیے ہوش میں آ گیا اور اس نے تمام واقعہ کا پتہ لگا دیا) اللہ مردوں کو زندہ کرتا ہے اور تمہیں اپنی نشانیاں دکھاتا ہے“۔

He further verifies the explanation :

”حاصل یہ ہے کہ وہ شخص اس سکتے کی حالت سے الہی تجویز کے مطابق ہوش میں آ گیا اور اس نے قاتلوں کا کافی و کامل طور پر ایسا پتہ لگا دیا جس سے کسی شخص کے لئے انکار کی کوئی گنجائش نہ رہی پھر اس شخص کی طاقت زائل ہونے لگی اور وہ سیچ سیچ مقتول ہو گیا اور خدا تعالیٰ کا فرمان ”قتلتم“ بھی اس کے حق میں صحیح ثابت ہوا“³⁴۔

Maulvi Muhammad Ali not only naturalizes the event but also links it with the crucifixion of Jesus and the explanation of the verse goes as such :

”یعنی بعض قتل سے اس کو مار دو یا فعل قتل اس پر پورا وارد نہ ہونے دو . . . حضرت مسیح پر پورا فعل قتل وارد نہیں ہوا۔ صلیب پر آپ صرف تین گھنٹے رہے اور اتنی تھوڑی دیر میں کوئی شخص صلیب کی موت سے نہیں مر سکتا . . . بھی ”فاضرہوہ ببعضہا“ ہے اور ”کذالک یحی اللہ الموتی“ کہہ کر بتلا دیا کہ جس کو تم مردہ خیال کر بیٹھے تھے اسے خدا نے یوں زندہ رکھا یا زندہ کر دیا“³⁵۔

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood seems not to be satisfied with the above interpretations. He, therefore, invents a novel idea :

”ہم نے کہا کہ اس (مقتول کے واقعہ) کو (ایسے ہی) بعض اور واقعات سے ملا کر دیکھو (پھر تمہیں حقیقت معلوم ہو جائے گی) اللہ تعالیٰ اس طرح مردوں کو زندہ کرتا ہے (یعنی ایسی تدبیریں بتاتا ہے جس سے وہ لوگ جو تمہارے خیال میں مردہ تھے درحقیقت زندہ ثابت ہو جاتے ہیں) اور تم کو اپنے نشان دکھاتا ہے تا کہ تم عقل کرو“³⁶۔

“Parvez takes the case of the man who was killed and had to be struck with part of a sacrificed cow. The author is at a loss what to think of this passage, and says : “Surely it concerns a historic event and in the light of historic research a correct apprehension will be gained The verses belong to the list of the mutashabihat. History will turn up a following page ; then these verses will be transferred to the list of the muhkamat”³⁷.

But Parvez, ignoring his explanation cited in Maarif, boldly repeats the idea already mentioned by his predecessors in his translation of Holy Quran, but in a very cautious way and in beautified words his psychological explanation goes on :

”مشرکانہ توہم ہرستیوں سے - جن میں تم مبتلا ہو چکے تھے انسان کی نفسیاتی کیفیت یہ ہو جاتی ہے کہ اسے کسی ذرا سی خلاف معمول بات کا سامنا کرنا پڑے تو اس پر لرزہ طاری ہو جاتا ہے - چوں کہ خدا تمہاری اس نفسیاتی کیفیت سے واقف تھا - اس لئے اس نے قاتل کا سراغ نکالنے کے لئے ایک نفسیاتی ترکیب بتائی (جو انسان کی اس زمانے کی ذہنی سطح کے اعتبار سے بڑی خلاف معمول تھی) اس نے کہا تم میں سے ایک ایک جاؤ اور مقتول کے کسی حصہ جسم کو اٹھا کر لاش کے ساتھ لگا دو (چنانچہ جو مجرم تھا جب وہ لاش کے قریب پہنچا تو خوف کی وجہ سے اس سے ایسے آثار نمایاں ہو گئے جو اس کے جرم کی غمازی

کرنے کے لئے کافی تھے) اس طرح اللہ تعالیٰ نے اس قتل کے راز کو بے نقاب کر دیا اور مجرم سے قصاص لیکر موت کو زندگی سے بدل دیا کیوں کہ قصاص میں قوم کی حیات کا راز پوشیدہ ہوتا ہے“³⁸۔

We have seen how the interpretation has developed from Sir Sayyid to Parvez and how one commentator has utilized the interpretations made by his precursors.

Now there is another event. Commenting on 2 : 259 Sir Sayyid says :

”حضرت نجمیا کو بیت المقدس کی تعمیر کی بڑی فکر تھی اور خدا کے سامنے ہمیشہ التجا اور دعا کیا کرتے تھے انہیں ترددات اور خدا سے التجا کرنے کے زمانے میں جیسا کہ مقتضائے فطرت انسانی ہے حضرت نجمیا نے رویا میں دیکھا اور ان کو تسلی ہوئی کہ بیت المقدس آباد اور تعمیر ہو جائے گا اسی رویا کا ذکر اس آیت میں ہے“³⁹۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim repeats the same idea :

“This verse refers to the ruins and forsaken condition of Jerusalem during the time of the Prophet Ezekiel and its reconstruction and population a hundred years after that all the scene that the prophet saw was in dream”⁴⁰.

Khawaja Ahmad Din has connected the whole event to Abraham and renders the whole event just as an example and this connection has been made by putting brackets filling in very interesting ideas :

”یا (اے ابراہیم؟ بحث کے بعد دوسرے درجہ میں - میں تجھے یہ مثال دے کر سمجھاتا ہوں وہ مثال یہ ہے) جیسا کہ اور (اے ابراہیم ہمارا منشا ہے) تا کہ ہم تجھے لوگوں کے لئے آیت (یعنی امام) بنائیں - (نا کہ تو انہیں سمجھائے کہ ایسے معجزات کرنا جن سے جبری ایمان پیدا ہو اللہ تعالیٰ کی حکمت کے منافی ہے) اور (اس بات کو سمجھالنے کے لئے کہ معنی الاموات ہونا خدا تعالیٰ کا خاصہ ہے ہم تجھے فرماتے ہیں) کہ ان ہڈیوں پر نظر دوڑا (جو ماؤں کے پیٹوں میں تیار ہوتی ہیں) ہم انہیں کیسے ابھارتے ہیں - پھر انہیں گوشت پہناتے ہیں - پس جب اس کے لئے (رشد - غی) سے متبین ہو گئی تو وہ بولا میں (پہلے ہی سے) جانتا ہوں کہ اللہ ہر شے پر قادر ہے“⁴¹۔

Maulvi Muhammad Ali combines the above interpretations and produces new one :

”کالذی سے صاف ثابت ہے کہ یہ مثالی واقعہ ہے - گویا معنی یوں ہوئے کیا تو نے اس شخص کی مثال یعنی اس کی مثالی حالت پر غور نہیں کیا - پس یہاں کسی ایسے واقعہ کی طرف اشارہ ہے جو ایک شخص کو عالم مثال یا عالم رویا میں پیش آیا ہے اصل غرض تم کو یہ سو سال کی موت کا رویا دکھانے کی یہی ہے کہ تماری قوم پر یہ موت سو سال تک رہے گی“⁴²۔

In his English translations Maulvi Muhammad Ali has rendered the translation of "اماتہ اللہ" "Allah caused him to remain in a state of death". He refers to Torah like his precursors and after a long discussion says :

"It is only too clear that the identical incident related in verse 2 : 259 now under discussion is also a vision"⁴³.

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood, too, refers too Torah like others and translates with the support of brackets :

"اس پر اللہ تعالیٰ نے اسے سو سال (تک خواب میں) مارے رکھا تب اللہ تعالیٰ نے فرمایا (یہ بھی ٹھیک ہے) اور تو (اس حالت میں) سو سال تک بھی رہا ہے"⁴⁴۔

Parvez, also steps on the footprints of his precursors and refers the event to Torah and repeats the same idea with the usual brackets :

"دوسری مثال بنی اسرائیل کی نشاۃ ثانیہ کی ہے تمثیلی انداز میں اسے یوں سمجھو کہ یہ اس لئے کیا گیا ہے کہ تم لوگوں کے لئے اس بات کی نشانی بن جاؤ (کہ قانون خداوندی کی رو سے مردہ اقوام کو بھی زندگی مل سکتی ہے) کیا تم جنین کی حالت پر غور نہیں کرتے کہ ہم کس طرح خون کے لوتھڑے سے ہڈیاں ابھارتے ہیں - انہیں سخت کرتے ہیں اور پھر ان پر گوشت پوست چڑھا کر انہیں ایک جیتا جاگتا بچہ بنا دیتے ہیں"⁴⁵۔

Further we examine the interpretation of 2 : 260. Sir Sayyid, discussing this verse, regards this event to be a vision :

"یہ قصہ جو یہاں مذکور ہوا ہے وہ رویا حضرت ابراہیم کا ہے - انہوں نے رویا میں خدا سے کہا کہ مجھ کو دکھلایا بتا کہ تو کس طرح مردے زندہ کرے گا پھر خواب ہی میں خدا کے بتلانے سے انہوں نے چار پرند جانور لیے اور ان کا قیمہ کر کے ملا دیا اور پہاڑوں پر رکھ دیا پھر بلایا تو وہ سب جانور الگ الگ زندہ ہو کر چلے آئے اور ان کے دل کو مردوں کے زندہ ہونے سے جن کے اجزا بعد مرنے کے عالم میں مخلوط و منتشر ہو جاتے ہیں طمانیت ہو گئی"⁴⁶۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim translates صرہن as, "tame them to thyself" and explaining the verse says :

"The birds whom thou kept and fed for a time with thy hands because so much attached to thee that they came flying to thee from distant hills"⁴⁷.

He further adds :

"It is also quite possible that Abraham might have been shown all this in a Vision and this verse may refer to what is mentioned in Gen XV-8-11"⁴⁸.

Maulvi Sher Ali, translating the verse, has taken the same idea in his very translation :

“Take four birds and make them attached to thyself then put each of them on a hill”⁴⁹.

Khawja Ahmad Din repeats the same idea in his comments :

”انہیں اپنی طرف مائل کر - پھر ان میں سے ایک ایک کو ہر پہاڑ پر رکھ دے“⁵⁰۔

Maulvi Muhammad Ali is not different in his explaining the verse under discussion from his precursors but he further beautifies it regarding it an example only and not an event :

”اس کیفیت کو سمجھانے کے لئے اللہ تعالیٰ نے ایک مثال دی ہے چار جانوروں کو لو اور ان کو ہلا لو پھر چار مختلف سمتوں میں ان کو ایک ایک کر کے رکھ دو . . . اس مثال سے حضرت ابراہیم کو سمجھ میں آ گیا“⁵¹۔

He, in his English translation, had made the meaning more clear when he says :

“It is an error to suppose that Abraham actually took four birds and tamed them. The Quran does not say it. It only makes Abraham realize the wonderful manifestation of Divine power by parable”⁵².

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood, repeating the same idea, overshoots the mark when he explores further discoveries :

”مراد یہ ہے کہ ہر چوٹی پر ایک ایک پرندہ رکھ دو . . . ان آیات میں حضرت ابراہیم کے ایک کشف کا ذکر ہے اور چار پرندوں سے یہ مراد ہے کہ حضرت ابراہیم کی اولاد چار دفعہ ترقی کرے گی اور چار دفعہ تنزل کرے گی“⁵³۔

Parvez gives philosophical background how the nations die and how new life is infused in them. Abraham was also struck by such a question. So God illustrated his programme by this experience :

”اس طریق کو سمجھنے کے لئے یوں کرو کہ تم چار پرندے لو۔ وہ شروع میں تم سے دور بھاگیں گے۔ انہیں اس طرح آہستہ آہستہ سدھاؤ کہ وہ تم سے مالوس ہو جائیں۔ آخر الامر ان کی یہ حالت ہو جائے گی کہ اگر تم انہیں الگ الگ مختلف پہاڑیوں پر چھوڑ دو اور انہیں آواز دو تو وہ اڑتے ہوئے تمہاری طرف آ جائیں گے۔ بس یہی طریقہ ہے ان (حق سے نا مانوس) لوگوں میں زندگی پیدا کرنے کا۔ تم انہیں اپنے قریب لاؤ اور نظام خداوندی سے اچھی طرح مانوس کراؤ۔ یہ نظام اپنے اندر اتنی قوت اور حکمت رکھتا ہے کہ اسے چھوڑ کر یہ کہیں نہیں جا سکیں گے“⁵⁴۔

Now take another example about the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ. Mr. E.R. Pike is right to say : “No personality in history has aroused such prolonged, such violent wide-spread controversy as Jesus of Nazareth”⁵⁵. The Holy Quran put

an end to the controversy going on between the Jews and christians for centuries and gave its final verdict. But Jesus has become again a target of controversial discussion by the Muslim modernist : Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan who himself wrote on the miraculous birth of Jesus, refuted this idea under the influence of Western thought and spirit of rationalism, so he said :

”جب کہ ان کی ولادت ٹھیک اسی طرح پر واقعہ ہوئی تھی جس طرح کہ عموماً بچوں کی ہوتی ہے کہ نو مہینے تک حمل میں رہے اور بر وقت ولادت حضرت مریم پر وہ تمام حالات طاری ہوئے جو عموماً عورتوں پر بچہ پیدا ہونے میں طاری ہوتے ہیں تو کسی طرح اعجازاً ان کے پیدا ہونے کا کسی کو احتمال بھی نہیں ہو سکتا تھا“⁵⁶۔

Sir Sayyid not only further supports his this idea but also refutes his speaking in cradle because it is against the laws of nature :

”یہودیوں کے اس قول سے بھی کہ ”یا مریم لقد جنّت بغیا“ حضرت عیسیٰ کے بن باپ کے پیدا ہونے پر استدلال نہیں ہو سکتا قرآن مجید سے ثابت نہیں ہوتا کہ حضرت عیسیٰ نے ایسی عمر میں جس میں حسب فطرت انسانی کوئی بچہ کلام نہیں کرتا۔ کلام کیا تھا“⁵⁷۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim, it is very interesting to note, admits the miraculous birth of Jesus :

“Evidently it appears from the Holy Quran that Jesus christ was born on Mary without a father under same laws of God, not known to man as yet”⁵⁸.

He further refers Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan which shows that he is somewhat influenced from him :

“Late Sir Sayyid Ahmad of Aligarh has denied it and explained the verses and beliefs referring to it in other ways”, and he has enumerated Sir Sayyid’s arguments⁵⁹.

Khawja Ahmad Din regards بشرآ سوياً to be a مرد ناصری or man of Nazareth. He gives a detailed account that he took her on a long journey and that he was present at the time of delivery and it was he who advised Mary to eat palm-dates and keep fast. He gives his verdict in the following words :

”حاصل یہ ہے کہ مریم کے لئے بحکم الہی وہ مرد ناصری آیا اور ان کے ساتھ حکم الہی سے نکاح کیا اور جب دیکھا کہ لوگ مریم کو اس نکاح کی وجہ سے ستاتے ہیں تو وہ انہیں پناہ دے کر ناصرت کی طرف لے آیا“⁶⁰۔

He has also rejected his speaking in cradle :

”اور وہ مہد میں (یعنی بچپن میں جب کہ نیک بچے نیکی کی باتیں کر سکتے ہیں) اور لوگوں سے (اپنی سمجھ کے مطابق نیکی کی) باتیں کرے گا“⁶¹۔

Maulvi Muhammad Ali, boldly, refutes the virgin-birth of Jesus. He says :

“It is remarkable that the Quran makes no mention at all of Mary’s husband, and in this respect the circumstances bear a strong resemblance to those connected with Mose’s birth, for there too no mention at all is made to Mose’s father. The mere fact, therefore, that there is no mention of Jesu’s father is not sufficient to show that Jesus had no father”⁶².

He further rejects the idea of his speaking in cradle too :

“As to speaking in the cradle and when of old age neither of them can be considered a miracle. Every healthy child which is not dumb begins to talk when in the cradle *The good news consists in the fact that the child announced will be a healthy child and shall not die in childhood*”⁶³.

He further, explaining the verse, gives his verdict :

“In their case there is no reference to Jesus being brought into existence without the agency of a male parent”⁶⁴.

The other great controversial issue about Jesus is the issue of his ascension. Sir Sayyid argues that Jesus died his natural death :

”صاف ظاہر ہوتا ہے کہ حضرت مسیح صلیب پر نہ مرے تھے بلکہ ان پر ایسی حالت طاری ہو گئی تھی کہ لوگوں نے ان کو مردہ سمجھا تھا حضرت عیسیٰ تین چار گھنٹے کے بعد صلیب پر سے اتار لیے گئے تھے اور ہر طرح پر یقین ہو سکتا ہے کہ وہ زندہ تھے رات کو وہ لحد میں سے نکال لیے گئے اور وہ مخفی اپنے مریدوں کی حفاظت میں رہے۔ حواریوں نے ان کو دیکھا اور ملے اور پھر کسی وقت اپنی موت سے مر گئے۔ بلاشبہ ان کو یہودیوں کی عداوت کے خوف سے نہایت مخفی طور پر کسی نہ معلوم مقام میں دفن کر دیا ہوگا۔ جو اب تک نہ معلوم ہے اور یہ مشہور کیا ہوگا کہ وہ آسمان پر چلے گئے“⁶⁵۔

Khawja Ahmad Din repeats the same notion as Sir Sayyid did. His remarks are as follows :

”اور انہوں نے اسے مصلوب بھی نہیں بنایا (یعنی اتنی دیر تک صلیب پر نہیں رکھا جس سے اس کا صلیب پر مرنا قرین قیاس ہو جائے) (حضرت مسیح بے ہوشی کے عالم میں تھے وہ خود اپنے پاؤں پر چل کر کہیں آ جا نہیں سکتے تھے۔ خدا تعالیٰ انہیں لوگوں کے ذریعے اٹھوا کر کسی ایسے علاقے میں لے گیا جہاں انہیں صحت عطا کی گئی اور ظالموں کے جبر سے خلاصی ملی۔ یہی ان کا خدا تعالیٰ کی طرف سے اٹھا کر لے جایا جانا تھا“⁶⁶۔

Maulvi Muhammad Ali like his precursors takes guidance from the Bible and suggests that Jesus died natural death and his ascension was only spiritual one :

”بلکہ اللہ نے اسے رفع عطا فرمایا یعنی بلندی درجات مطلب یہ ہے کہ یہ تو مصلوب مان کر اسے قرب الہی سے دور پھینکتے ہیں۔ مگر اللہ تعالیٰ نے اسے قرب عطا فرمایا استثناء ۲۱، ۲۳ اور پھر گلتیوں ۳، ۱۳ سے ثابت ہے کہ صلیب کی موت کو لعنتی موت سمجھا جاتا تھا اور لعنت کا مفہوم اللہ تعالیٰ سے دوری ہے پس لعنت کے ابطال کے لئے رفع کا ذکر کیا۔ کیوں کہ لعنت دوری ہے اور رفع قرب“⁶⁷۔

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood repeats the same point and refers to the Bible with the same references :

”واقعہ یہ ہے کہ اللہ نے اسے اپنے حضور میں عزت (و رفعت) دی تھی (اور وہ صلیب پر مر نہیں گیا تھا) کیوں کہ اللہ غالب (اور) حکمت والا ہے تورات میں ہے کہ جو صلیب پر مرے یعنی کاٹھ پر لٹکایا جائے وہ لعنتی ہوتا ہے۔ (استثناء ۲۱، ۲۳)“⁶⁸۔

Maulvi Muhammad Ali, supporting the idea of spiritual exaltation, cites recent discovery in this connection :

“ the evidence recently discovered which shows that Jesus travelled in the East after his unfortunate experience at the hands of the Syrian Jews and preached to the lost ten tribes of the Israelites who had settled in the East, in Afghanistan and Cashmere”⁶⁹.

Parvez repeats the points already stated by his predecessors, though in a logically beautiful manner :

”اصل بات وہی ہے جو اوپر بیان ہو چکی ہے (کہ مسیح نہ تو قتل ہوا اور نہ ہی بزعم یہود۔ صلیب پر لعنتی موت مرا) بلکہ اللہ نے اس کے مدارج کو بلند کر دیا تھا اور اللہ کا یہ انتظام (کہ مسیح صحیح و سلامت ان لوگوں کے چنگل سے نکل گیا خدا کی) زبردست قوت اور حکمت پر دلالت کرتا ہے یعنی خدا کے قانون میں جہاں یہ قوت ہے کہ وہ دشمن پر غالب آجائے وہاں وہ ایسی حسن تدبیر بھی اپنے اندر رکھتا ہے کہ عندالضرورت دشمن سے محفوظ رہا جائے“⁷⁰۔

Another example is cited.

Discussing the miracles of Moses mentioned in 7 : 105-107, Sir Sayyid tries to naturalize the “miracles” :

”یہ کیفیت جو حضرت موسیٰ پر طاری ہوئی اسی قوت نفس انسان کا ظہور تھا۔ جس کا اثر خود ان پر ہوا تھا۔ یہ کوئی معجزہ مافوق الفطرت نہ تھا اور نہ اس پہاڑ کے تلے میں جہاں یہ امر واقع ہوا کسی معجزہ کے دکھانے کا موقع تھا اور نہ یہ تصور ہو سکتا ہے کہ وہ پہاڑ کے تلے کوئی مکتب تھا۔ جہاں پیغمبروں کو معجزے سکھائے جاتے ہوں اور معجزوں کی مشق کرائی جاتی ہو۔ حضرت موسیٰ میں از روئے فطرت و جبلت کے وہ قوت نہایت قوی تھی جس سے اس قسم کے اثر ظاہر ہوتے ہیں۔ انہوں نے اس خیال سے کہ وہ لکڑی سانپ ہے اپنی لاٹھی پھینکی اور وہ ان کو سانپ یا اژدھا دکھائی دی۔ یہ خود ان کا تصرف اپنے خیال میں تھا“⁷¹۔

Here Sir Sayyid does not mention that if the said miracle was his own sway, why Moses feared and fled, instead of being very powerful in this instinct, naturally as he himself admits. He, again, on the performance of these two miracles in the court of Pharaoh, repeats the same idea :

”در حقیقت وہ لائھیماں یا رسیاں سانپ اور اژدھے نہیں ہو گئی تھیں بلکہ بسبب تاثیر قوت نفس انسانی کے جو ساحروں نے کسب سے حاصل کی تھیں وہ رسیاں اور لائھیماں لوگوں کو سانپ اور اژدھے معلوم ہوتی تھیں۔ حضرت موسیٰ نے جو کچھ کیا وہ بھی بمتقاضی قوت نفس انسانی تھا۔ کوئی امر مافوق الفطرت نہ تھا مگر وہ قوت حضرت موسیٰ میں فطری اور جبلی تھی“⁷²۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim perhaps keeping in view the obvious meanings comprehended from the Quranic text, does not change the translation and made comments nowhere on this event, instead of its being repeated in various surahs of the Holy Quran. But still he compares it to the Biblical reference :

“This miracle of Moses is not expressly mentioned anywhere in the Old Testament but seems to be hinted at in Exod. 4-8”⁷³.

Khawaja Ahmad Din tries to prove it a natural happening according to the established laws of nature stating quite new facts, unknown to anyone else before him :

”پس اس نے اپنا عصا پھینکا سو جب تو وہ (عصا اس طرح حرکت کرتا تھا تھا گویا کہ وہ سوٹا) ایک ظاہر سانپ تھا (اس عصا میں اس بجلی کے سبب سے جو موسیٰ کے جسم میں محفوظ رکھی گئی تھی تین دفعہ تھوڑی دیر کے لیے حرکت پیدا ہوئی لیکن وہ عصا اپنی ذات کو چھوڑ کر سانپ کی ذات میں ہرگز ہرگز منقلب نہیں ہوا تھا“⁷⁴۔

Maulvi Muhammad Ali tries to approach the subject more “scientifically” :

”پس اس حالت میں بھی جب حضرت موسیٰ اللہ تعالیٰ کے ساتھ ہمکلام تھے ان معجزات کا ظہور ایک کشفی رنگ رکھتا ہے ہاں فرعون کے سامنے بھی ان معجزات کا ظہور ہوا ہے لیکن بعض اوقات کشفی نظارہ کے دیکھنے میں دوسرے لوگوں کو بھی اللہ تعالیٰ اپنے تصرف کلام سے شریک کر دیتا ہے اور یہی اعجاز ہے ورنہ حضرت موسیٰ کے سوٹے میں یہ خاصیت نہ تھی کہ جب زمین پر ڈالیں تو اژدھا بن جائے“⁷⁵۔

He, further, regards these miracles as hints or prophecies of the coming events :

”ہاں عصا کے اژدھا بننے اور ید بیضا کے ایک معنی بھی تھے۔ یعنی اول میں یہ اشارہ تھا کہ حضرت موسیٰ کے پیروں کی جماعت (لفظ جماعت پر بھی بولا جاتا ہے) اپنے فریق مخالف پر غالب آئے گی اور ید بیضا میں اشارہ حضرت موسیٰ کے دلائل نیرہ کی طرف تھا۔ جو دلوں کو کہا جائیں گے“⁷⁶۔

In his English translation discussing the nature of these miracles which Moses experienced before going to Pharaoh, he says :

“It is certain that the rod was seen turning into a serpent by Moses alone, when he was in a state of communion with the Divine Being ; and, therefore, it was undoubtedly a state of vision—a state in which a person is temporarily transported to a spiritual sphere”⁷⁷.

Distorting the translation of 7 : 106-108, Ch. Ghulam Ahmad Parvez, presents this event in a strange-farfetched form :

”فرعون نے کہا کہ اگر تم خدا کی طرف سے کوئی واضح دلیل لائے ہو تو اسے اپنے دعوے کی صداقت میں پیش کرو۔ اس پر موسیٰ نے ان قوانین و دلائل کو پیش کیا۔ جن کی بنا پر اس نے وہ دعویٰ کیا تھا اور جنہیں وہ نہایت مضبوطی سے تھامے ہوئے تھا۔ یہ محکم دلائل اپنی صداقت کے زور دروں پر۔ اس طرح آگے بڑھتے چلے جاتے تھے کہ ان کی قوت اور شدت واضح طور پر سامنے آ رہی تھی“⁷⁸۔

He, himself, admits here that he has not presented the true translation, so he remarks in the foot-note :

”یہ ان الفاظ (عصا۔ ثعبان مبین۔ يد بیضا) کے مجازی معنی ہیں۔ جنہیں ہمارے نزدیک استعارة استعمال کیا گیا ہے۔ (اس کی منہ لغات القرآن میں اپنے اپنے مقام پر ملے گی) ویسے عصا کے حقیقی معنی لائھی۔ ثعبان مبین کے معنی نمایاں اژدھا اور يد بیضا کے معنی سفید چمکیلا ہاتھ ہیں“⁷⁹۔

Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan dealt with the ascension of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. in detail and narrated so many traditions, then criticized and refuted the same and tried his best to prove that this event was purely a spiritual vision ; he had formulated this idea long before writing the Quran—commentary (1880) and had cited in his “Essays on the Life of Muhammad” (1870)⁸⁰, which was later published in Urdu, as such :

”معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ رسول خدا نے خواب میں دیکھا تھا کہ وہ مکہ سے بیت المقدس گئے ہیں اور اگر اس روایت کو جس میں شق صدر کا بھی ذکر ہے صحیح مانا جاوے۔ تو یہ بھی آنحضرت نے خواب میں دیکھا تھا کہ ان کا سینہ چاک کر کے ان کا دل پانی سے دھویا گیا ہے اور اسی خواب میں آنحضرت نے اور بھی کچھ خدا کی نشانیاں دیکھیں۔ جس کی تفصیل قرآن مجید میں مذکور نہیں“⁸¹۔

He further explains the “signs of God” referred to in the verse :

”ہس وہ نشانیاں وہی احکام تھے جو عالم رویا میں ان کو وحی کئے گئے“⁸²۔

Consequently in his Quran-commentary (1880-1895) he gave his verdict and concluding the discussion of the possibility of the ascension of the Holy Prophet, P.B.U.H. made it incumbent on every muslim to accept and thus we see that his opinion which he started from ہے معلوم ہوتا ہے in his "Essays" now came to a strong decision, in the following words :

”اب ہم غور کرتے ہیں احادیث معراج پر جن میں صاف پایا جاتا ہے کہ وہ ایک واقعہ ہے جو سوتے میں آنحضرت نے دیکھا تھا اور دلالت النص سے بھی پایا جاتا ہے۔ اور صحاح کی کسی حدیث سے نہیں پایا جاتا کہ حالت بیداری میں دیکھا اور بجسدہ آپ بیت المقدس اور آسمانوں پر تشریف لے گئے بلکہ بر خلاف اس کے چند حدیثوں میں سونے کی حالت پائی جاتی ہے۔ تو ہمارا اور ہر ذی عقل کا بلکہ ہر مسلمان کا فرض ہے کہ اس کو ایک واقعہ خواب کا تسلیم کرے“⁸³۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim, explaining 17 : 1 makes no change in the translation, but in his foot-note on "signs" he gives a detailed account :

"The signs which had to appear after leaving Mecca and which were promised in 13 : 40 "whether we show thee some of the signs which we threaten unto them or take thee up". It was also prophesied in *Malachi 3, that he will reach the temple suddenly. Many of the further events were shown figuratively in the vision referred to here*"⁸⁴.

He has given, further, a detailed account of authentic traditions, but he concludes as follows :

"All this was a magnificent vision, shown unto the Prophet during night as clearly pointed out in the first verse of this chapter. "Who carried his servant by night". The 60th verse of this chapter calls it a vision"⁸⁵.

He has further enumerated interpretations of various elements of the "Vision", only some them are cited here to clarify his pattern :

<i>Elements of the dream</i>	<i>Their interpretations</i>
Gabrael	... shall travel for knowledge, get security and overcome the enemies.
Rising to the first heaven	... shall have a short age.
Rising to the second heaven	... shall gain knowledge and wisdom.
Rising to the third heaven	... shall gain honours and victory in this world.
Rising to the fourth heaven	... shall approach a king or become a king.
Rising to the fifth heaven	... shall meet great troubles and wars.

Rising to the sixth heaven ... shall attain everlasting glory and righteousness.
 Rising to the seventh heaven ... shall obtain unparalleled glory and reverence"⁸⁶.

He has cited such 37 interpretations.

Khawaja Ahmad Din translates 17 : 1 in such a style that he negates all possibilities of any miraculous element :

”پاک ہے جس نے ایک (ہی) رات میں اپنے بندے کو حرمت والی مسجد سے (جو مکے کے وسط میں ہے مکہ کے حدود کی) دور کی مسجد تک سیر کرائی جس (مسجد) کے ارد گرد ہم نے (ظاہری و باطنی) برکت دی تھی (اس سیر کا مقصود یہ تھا) تا کہ ہم اسے اپنی (قدرتی) نشانیاں دکھائیں - بلا شبہ وہ اصل سننے والا اصل دیکھنے والا ہے“⁸⁷۔

He further explicitly verifies المسجد الاقصیٰ as such :

”المسجد الاقصیٰ کے معنی ہیں کسی قصبے کی دور کی مسجد جو اس قصبے کی حدود میں سے دور کی حد پر واقع ہو“⁸⁸۔

He has tried to locate the very mosque as follows :

”پس مشعر الحرام مکے کی دور کی مسجد ہے - یہ مسجد حدود مکہ کی ایک انتہائی پیری کے پاس تھی اور اس کے پاس مسافروں کے آنے جانے کے لئے باغ تھا جس کو جنت العاوی کہتے تھے - پس اس مسجد کے ارد گردی برکات بھی تھیں جہاں ذکر الہی ہوتا تھا“⁸⁹۔

Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah tries to explain the ascension as follows :

”یہود و نصاریٰ کی مخالفت و شقاوت مذکور موجود ہے خصوصاً وہ محمد رسول اللہ کو بھی مفتری علی اللہ و کذاب افاک کاہن وغیرہ وغیرہ کہہ کر آپ کی اہانت کرتے رہتے تھے - اس لئے رب العالمین نے آپ کو بطور معجزہ سخت اندھیری رات میں صرف بحالت نیند ہی نیند خواب ہی میں اس خاص زمین کی سیر کرائی“⁹⁰۔

Maulvi Muhammad Ali, repeats the same interpretation though in some different words :

”غور کیا جائے تو خود قرآن شریف اور احادیث سے معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ صحیح مذہب وہی ہے جس کی طرف قلت گئی ہے یعنی یہ کہ معراج نبوی اس جسد عنصری سے نہیں بلکہ دوسرے نورانی جسم کے ساتھ تھا جو اللہ تعالیٰ حالت کشف میں اپنے برگزیدوں کو عالم روحانی کی سیر کے لئے عطا فرماتا ہے جس سے صاف ثابت ہوا کہ وہ سب کچھ آپ پر حالت خواب میں وارد ہوا“⁹¹۔

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood has made no change in the translation of 17 : 1. But in the interpretation of 53 : 1-14 he cites, not different from his precursors :

”اس آیت سے یہ بھی ثابت ہوتا ہے کہ معراج روحانی دو دفعہ ہوا تھا نہ کہ ایک بار جسے مسلمانوں کا خیال ہے۔ اس آیت سے دھوکا کھا کر مفسرین نے اسرا کی آیات کو معراج کی آیات قرار دے دیا ہے۔ حالانکہ اسراء بالکل اور شے تھی اور صرف دنیا پر تھی اور معراج میں آنحضرت کی روح آسمان پر گئی تھی اور اسی کے متعلق فرماتا ہے کہ یہ دو دفعہ ہوا تھا ایک دفعہ دنی کی صورت میں اور ایک دفعہ تدلی کی صورت میں“⁹²۔

He further, repeats the same idea in the conclusion :

”معراج کے دیکھنے میں کوئی غلطی کا امکان نہ تھا وہ ایک بلند شان کشف تھا صرف عام رویا یا کشف نہ تھا“⁹³۔

Yaqub Ali Turab Ahmadi rejects the traditional description of the ascension of the Holy Prophet, P.B.U.H. and then tells that the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. did have an ascension but what was its nature is told as follows :

”اہل مکہ پر یہ آیتیں پڑھی جاتی ہیں اور بتایا جاتا ہے کہ اب آنحضرت تم میں سے ہجرت کرتے ہیں تمہارے منصوبے اور تدابیر جو تم آنحضرت کے قید کرنے یا قتل کرنے کے کر رہے ہو محض ناکام رہیں گے یہ بھی آنحضرت کی کامیابی اور صداقت کی دلیل ہے کہ ان کو ان آیتوں کے ذریعہ اپنے جانے کا وقت تک بتا دیا ہے“⁹⁴۔

Ghulam Ahmad Parvez, is much clever to translate the verse in such a way as to link it with the event of Hijra as explained by Yaqub Ali Turab.

”(مخالفین کی جن ریشہ دوانیوں کی طرف پیچھے اشارہ کیا گیا ہے۔ ان میں آخری سکیم یہ تھی کہ رسول کو چپکے سے قتل کر دیا جائے لیکن) خدا کی اسکیمیں اتنی بلند و برتر ہیں کہ وہ ان کے قیاس و گمان میں بھی نہیں آ سکتیں۔ چنانچہ وہ اپنی اسکیم کے مطابق۔ اپنے بندے کو راتوں رات بیت الحرام (مکہ) سے نکال کر (مدینہ کی) کشادہ سر زمین کی طرف لے گیا تا کہ اس دور دراز مقام میں جا کر نظام خداوندی کی تشکیل کرے۔ ہم نے اس مقام اور اس کے گرد و پیش کو بڑا بابرکت بنایا ہے۔ اس کی فضا، آسمانی انقلاب کے لئے بڑی سازگار ہے۔ یہ سب اس لئے کیا گیا ہے کہ خدا اب ان باتوں کو آشکارا کر دے۔ جن کا وعدہ اتنے عرصے سے کیا جاتا رہا ہے۔ یقیناً وہ سب کچھ دیکھنے سننے والا ہے۔ اس لئے اس کا ہر فیصلہ علم و حکمت پر مبنی ہوتا ہے“⁹⁵۔

Sir Sayyid, to naturalize the celebrated event of the “People of the Elephant”, remarks that it was plague which caused this destruction as generally it does elsewhere and that there was no miracle in it. He concludes :

”ابراہہ کے لشکر میں چیچک کی وبا پھیلی جو اس سے پہلے نہیں ہوئی تھی۔ تمام لشکر برباد ہو گیا“⁹⁶۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim, mentioning the destruction of Abraha, the Governor of Yaman, and his army with some elephants, when they drew near Makkah to demolish the Kaba, admits that its occurrence was due to the vengeance of God. He further tells that the event has been explained in two ways. After narrating the traditional way, he further mentions the same as cited by Sir Sayyid :

“That they were destroyed by an extraordinary severe epidemic of small pox which causes great havoc at times in the Ethiopians. In confluent forms, the body swells up into a pulpy mass resembling herbage that is eaten down by the cattle (Here his argument as a physician is remarkable). The pathological cause of small-pox is now known to be specific micrococci and disease is highly infectious”⁹⁷.

Maulvi Muhammad Ali repeats the same idea as cited by his precursors but somewhat in a more natural form :

“Meanwhile a virulent form of small-pox or some other pertilence broke out in Abraha’s army, with such severity that the army retreated in “confusion and dismay”, many of them, being unable to find their way back, perishing in the valleys, while a part was swept away by floods”⁹⁸.

As there is no mention of flood in the Holy Quran, nor it can be deduced, however, from its text, he quotes Muir’s “Life of Mahomet”⁹⁹. In his Urdu translation, Maulvi Muhammad Ali, further explains it :

”اور پرندوں کے بھیجنے میں اشارہ یہ ہے کہ جب لاشیں چھوڑ کر لشکر بھاگ گیا تو پرندوں نے انہیں نوح نوح کر پتھروں پر مارا اور کھائے ہوئے بھس کی طرح کر دیا۔“¹⁰⁰۔

Mr. Yaqub Ali Turab Ahmadi repeats the same idea in his explanation :

”عام قاعدہ کے موافق کہ جب کثرت سے مردے ہوں اور کوئی جلانے یا گاڑنیوالا نہ ہو تو ان کو پرندے کھاتے ہیں۔ ان موذیوں کو بھی ان پرندوں نے کھایا اور طیر سے مراد وہی مردار خور پرندے ہیں“¹⁰¹۔

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood, perhaps, considered it sufficient to make only a slight change in the translation of the verse under discussion :

”کیا (ان کو حملہ سے قبل ہلاک کر کے) ان کو منصوبے کو باطل نہیں کر دیا اور (اس کے بعد) ان (کی لاشوں) پر جھنڈ کے جھنڈ پرندے بھیجے جو ان (کے گوشت) کو سخت قسم کے پتھروں پر مارتے (اور نوچتے) تھے“¹⁰²۔

Maulvi Muhammad Ali had cited in his “General Remarks” on chapter “The Elephant” as follows :

“This chapter shows that if Allah was so jealous for the protection of a mere emblem of His Unity, a building of stones, the Kaba, that he destroyed most powerful army for its sake He would be still more jealous for his chosen prophet”¹⁰³.

Now comes Ghulam Ahmad Parvez, whose multipointed interpretation is enriched with the material of his predecessor and having something more to prove this event quite natural. He has collected all the points in his very translation with the support of brackets :

”اگر یہ مخالفین اس خیال میں بیٹھے ہیں کہ ان کی اتنی بڑی قوت کو کون شکست دے سکتا ہے تو ان سے کہو کہ) کیا تم نے اپنی آنکھوں سے نہیں دیکھا تھا کہ تمہارے نشو و نما دینے والے نے اس لشکر کا کیا حشر کر دیا تھا جو ہاتھی لے کر حملہ آور ہوا تھا؟ تم نے اپنی آنکھوں سے دیکھ لیا تھا کہ خدا نے ان کی خفیہ تدبیر کو کس طرح ناکام بنا کر رکھ دیا تھا۔ (انہوں نے ایک غیر مانوس خفیہ راستہ اختیار کیا تھا تا کہ وہ تم پر اچانک حملہ کر دیں۔ لیکن) چیلوں اور گدھوں کے جھنڈ (جو عام طور پر لشکر کے ساتھ آڑتے چلے جاتے ہیں کیوں کہ انہیں معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ انہیں بہت سی لاشیں کھانے کو مہیں گی) وہ ان کے سر پر منڈلاتے ہوئے آگئے اور اس طرح تم نے دور سے بھانپ لیا کہ پہاڑ کے پیچھے کوئی لشکر آ رہا ہے (یوں ان کی خفیہ تدبیر طشت از بام ہو گئی)۔ چنانچہ تم نے پہاڑ پر چڑھ کر ان پر سخت ہتھراؤ کیا اور اس طرح اس لشکر کو اس طرح کر دیا جیسے کھایا ہوا بھس ہو (یعنی ان کا کچومر نکال دیا) (یہ سب کچھ تمہاری آنکھوں کے سامنے ہوا تھا جب اتنے بڑے لشکر کو یوں شکست مل گئی تھی تو تم کس گنتی شمار میں ہو۔ تمہاری خفیہ تدابیر بھی ناکام رہ جائیں گی“¹⁰⁴۔

In the examples cited above we have observed the true picture of so-called development of Quranic exegesis. If the moderists will go on explaining the Holy Book in such a free style what will be results of such exegetical trends? Are we not demolishing our houses with our own hands under the influence of West? Therefore, take a lesson, O You who have eyes”¹⁰⁵.

FOOT NOTES

1. J.M.S. Baljon, *Modern Muslim Koran Interpretation*, Leiden, 1961, p. 2.
2. *ibid.*
3. *ibid.*, p. 4.
4. *ibid.*, p. 4., cf., also Mr. Dar who remarks : "He (Sir Sayyid) was the first man in modern India who realised the necessity for a new interpretation of Islam that was liberal, modern and progressive", (Dar, *Religious Thought of Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, Lahore, 1957, p. 268).
5. *ibid.*, p. 5.
6. "Religious Thought of Sayyid Ahmad Khan" by Bashir Ahmad Dar, published by Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore, 1957, p. 135.
7. *ibid.*
8. Ibn Rushd, *Kitab al-Kashf an Manahij al-Adilla*, Egypt, 1319, A.H., p. 79.
9. B.A. Dar, *Religious Thought of Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, p. 272.
10. Sir Sayyid, *Tafsir al-Quran*, Agra, 1903,
11. Sir Sayyid, *Tafsir al-Quran*, Agra, 1903, vol. IV, p. 122.
12. *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 221.
13. *ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 70-71.
14. *ibid.*, pp. 83-84.
15. *ibid.*, p. 87.
16. *ibid.*, p. 99.
17. Khawaja Ahmad Din, *Bayan Lin Nas*, Kitabkhana Ummat-i-Muslima, Amritsar, 1936, vol. I, p. 197.
18. Muhammad Ali, *Bayan al-Quran*, Ahmadiya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam, Lahore, 1340 A.H., vol. I, p. 62.
19. Muhammad Ali, *The Holy Quran*, 5th ed., Lahore, 1963, p. 25.
20. Bashiruddin Mahmood, *Tafsir Saghir*, Rabwah, p. 15, cf., also his *Tafsir, Kabir* vol. I, p. 418.
21. Y.A. Turab, *Tafsir al-Quran*, Qadian, 1318 A.H., p. 106.
22. Parvez, *Mafhum al-Quran*, Part I, op. cit.
23. Sir Sayyid, *Tafsir*, vol. I, p. 112.
24. Abdul Hakim, *The Holy Quran*, Rajinder Press, Patiala, 1905, p. 27.
25. Abdullah Chakralwi, *Tarjamatul Quran Bi-Ayat al-Furqan*, Islamia Steam Press, Lahore, p. 42.
26. Khwaja Ahmad Din, *Bayan*, Amritsar, vol. I, p. 199.
27. Muhammad Ali, *The Holy Quran*, Lahore, p. 29.
28. Muhammad Ali, *Bayan al-Quran*, Lahore, vol. I, p.70.

29. Y.A. Turab, Tafsir al-Quran, Qadian, 1313 A.H., p. 95.
30. Bashiruddin Mahmood, Tafsir Saghir, p. 17.
31. Parvez, Mafhoom al-Quran, Part I, op. cit.
32. Sir Sayyid, Tafsir, vol. I, p. 120.
33. Abdullah Chakralwi, Tarjamatul Quran, Lahore, p. 57.
34. Khawaja Ahmad Din, Bayan, Amritsar, p. 214.
35. Muhammad Ali, Bayan, Lahore, p. 79, cf., also his Eng., trans, pp. 35-36.
36. Bashiruddin Mahmood, Tafsir Saghir, p. 21.
37. Parvez, Ma'arif, iii, 355, cf., also Baljon, Modern Muslim Koran Interpretation, p. 52.
38. Parvez, Mafhoom al-Quran, Part I, op. cit.
39. Sir Sayyid, Tafsir, vol. I, p. 290.
40. Abdul Hakim, The Holy Quran, Patiala, pp. 92-93.
41. Khawaja Ahmad Din, Bayan, Amritsar, vol. I, p. 384.
42. Muhammad Ali, Bayan, Lahore, vol. I, p. 236.
43. Muhammad Ali, The Holy Quran, Lahore, p. 123.
44. Bashiruddin, Tafsir Saghir, p. 96, cf., also Yaqub Ali Turab Ahmadi, Tafsiral-Quran, Qadian, 1903, pp. 13-14.
45. Parvez, Mafhoom al-Quran, Part III, pp. 101-102.
46. Sir Sayyid, Tafsir, Vol. I, p. 292.
47. Abdul Hakim, The Holy Quran, Patiala, p. 96.
48. ibid., p. 96.
49. Maulvi Sher Ali, The Holy Quran, Rabwah, 1955, p. 42.
50. Khawaja Ahmad Din, Bayan, Amritsar, vol. I, p. 384.
51. Muhammad Ali, Bayan, Lahore, vol. I, p. 238.
52. Muhammad Ali, Holy Quran, Lahore, p. 125.
53. Bashiruddin Mahmood, Tafsir Saghir, p. 97.
54. Parvez, Mafhoom al-Quran, vol. III, p. 103.
55. Ency., of R&RR., p. 210.
56. Sir Sayyid, Tafsir, Vol. II, p. 24.
57. ibid., p. 37.
58. Abdul Hakim, Holy Quran, Patiala, p. 111.
59. ibid., pp. 111-112.
60. Khawaja Ahmad Din, Bayan, Amritsar, vol. IV, p. 122, cf., also Vol. I, p. 639.
61. ibid., vol. I, p. 474.

62. Muhammad Ali, Holy Quran, Lahore, p. 155.
63. ibid., p. 155.
64. ibid., p. 161.
65. Sir Sayyid, Tafsir, vol. II, p. 45.
66. Khawaja Ahmad Din, Bayan, Amritsar, vol. I, p. 642-643.
67. Muhammad Ali, Bayan, Lahore, vol. I, p. 578.
68. Bashiruddin Mahmood, Tafsir Saghir, p. 210.
69. Muhammad Ali, Holy Quran, p. 155.
70. Parvez, Mafhoom al-Quran, vol. VI, p. 230.
71. Sir Sayyid, Tafsir, vol, III, p. 222.
72. ibid., p. 224.
73. Abdul Hakim, The Holy Quran, Patiala, p. 273.
74. Khawaja Ahmad Din, Bayan, Amritsar, vol. II, p. 245.
75. Muhammad Ali, Bayan, Lahore, vol. II, p. 767, cf., also Holy Quran, Lahore, p. 352, cf., also Miss Iqbal Khanam :
- ”پیغمبر پر کشفی حالت طاری ہو جاتی ہے جس سے وہ روحانی چیزوں کا مشاہدہ کرتا ہے۔ اب کشفی حالت . . . وہ سوئے کا اژدھا دیکھ لے۔ خواہ قدرت اس سے بھی بڑی کوئی چیز دکھا دے“۔ (Asan Quran, Jullundar, p. 1075)
76. ibid.
77. Muhammad Ali, Holy Quran, Lahore, p. 351.
78. Parvez, Mafhoom al-Quran, Part IX, pp. 365-366.
79. ibid.
80. Shorter Ency. of Islam, p. 25.
81. Sir Sayyid, Al-Khutbat al-Ahmadiyya, p. 666.
82. ibid., p. 674.
83. Sir Sayyid, Tafsir, vol. VI, p. 122.
84. Abdul Hakim, The Holy Quran, Patiala, p. 426.
85. ibid., p. 430.
86. ibid., pp. 433-434.
87. Khawaja Ahmad Din, Bayan, Amritsar, p. 16.
88. ibid., p. 15.
89. ibid., p. 16.
90. Abdullah Chakralwi, Tarjamatul Quran, Lahore, Part XV, p. 1.
91. Muhammad Ali, Bayan, Lahore, vol. II, p. 1108.

92. Bashiruddin Mahmood, Tafsir, p. 1119.
93. ibid., p. 1120.
94. Y.A. Turab, Tarjamatul Quran, Qadian, 1919, pt. XV, p. 3.
95. Parvez, Mafhoom al-Quran, Pt. XV, p. 626.
96. Sir Sayyid, Al-Khutbat al-Ahmadiyya, p. 666.
97. Abdul Hakim, Holy Quran, Patiala, p. 910, cf. also Dr. Basharat Ahmad, Anwaral-Quran, Lahore, Pt. XXX, p. 237.
98. Muhammad Ali, Holy Quran, Lahore, p. 1224, cf., also Bayan al-Quran, Lahore, vol, III, pp. 1982-83.
99. Sir William Muir, Life of Muhammad, Introduction, P.C., Vol. III, P.C.
100. Muhammad Ali, Bayan, Lahore, vol. III, p. 1983.

101. Tarjamatul-Quran, Pt., XXX, Qadian, 1910, p. 104, cf., also Dr. Basharat Ahmad who says :

”قرین قیاس یہی ہے کہ پرندے جو جھنڈ کے جھنڈ آئے ان کے چونچ یا پنچوں سے جو مٹی کے سنگریزے گرے ان میں چیچک کا زہر یا جراثیم تھے جن کی وجہ سے لشکر میں چیچک پھوٹ پڑی اور ایسی مری پڑی کہ وہ لشکر تباہ ہو گیا اور خود ابرہہ چیچک سے بیمار ہو کر واپس یمن گیا اور وہاں سخت ناکامی کی حالت میں مر گیا۔“

Dr. Basharat has further justified that the birds carried in their beaks germs of small-pox as follows :

”اغلب ہے کہ کسی دلدل میں جو جراثیم سے بھری ہو بیٹھ کر اڑے ہوں ان کے پنچوں میں وہ سوکھی ہوئی کیچڑ لگی ہو جو ابرہہ کے لشکر پر گری اور چیچک کے پھیلنے کا موجب ہو گئی۔“

102. Bashiruddin Mahmood, Tafsir Saghir, p. 1312, cf., also Dr. Basharat who quotes Maulana Hakim Nuruddin (Successor of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) :

”ترمیمہم بجارة من سجیل کے معنی حضرت مولانا نورالدین مرحوم یہ کیا کرتے تھے کہ ان کی لاشوں کو سخت پتھروں پر مارتے تھے۔“

103. Muhammad Ali, Holy Quran, Lahore, 1224.
104. Talu-i-Islam, Lahore, Vol. XX, No., 12, p. 71.
105. Al-Quran, 59 : 2.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION—DISTINCTION BETWEEN ORTHODOX AND MODERNIST INTERPRETATIONS OF THE QURAN & MIRACLES—MODERN EXPOSITION AND ATTEMPTS AT DISTORTION OF QURANIC TEACHINGS WITH EXAMPLES—AN ATTEMPT AT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF ORTHODOX TEACHINGS WITH REGARD TO MIRACLES

In the preceding chapter (i.e. Chap. V) we have seen so many examples of the distorted interpretations of the miracles of the Quran cited by the modernity-loving category of the commentators. The main cause of such interpretations, if we ponder ever it, is quite obvious that these modernists are dazzled by the light of scientific knowledge and material progress of the West. They are in the shakles of the same materialistic wave as it prevailed in Europe in 18th and 19th centuries. The advancement in the field of new sciences and new branches of knowledge, vast material progress and innumerable surprising inventions, wonders of the modern life—all prove the supermacy of human mind. The feeling of a little success and further constant struggle to make this vast universe subservient to man, has given men an air and led them to think that it is the utility of reason alone which opens the new avenues to the progress, and thus they became addicted to apply reason in all four corners of knowledge and even in that field which was beyond their limits and quite inaccessible and unapproachable to human reason.

The achievement of scientific knowledge, to make researches, to investigate or to go deep in a thing, in itself, is not wrong. The idea of the supermacy of human mind is not new. The Holy Quran, being a complete code of life and containing the best and the highest ideals for all nations and for all times—introduced this idea in an age when civilization had hardly made any progress towards this ideal :

“And surely We have honoured the children of Adam, and We carry them in the land and the sea, and We have given them of good things, and We have made them to excel most of those whom We have created”. (Al-Quran, 17 : 70).

Man is not a mean, weak and ordinary creature, but he is regarded as an excellent masterpiece of the Creator :

“And certainly We created man in the best make”. (Al-Quran, 95 : 4)

Man has been gifted with enormous capabilities for progress and perfection. The Holy Quran points out :

“And He has made the ships subservient to you, that they might run their course in the sea by His command, and He has made the rivers subservient to you”. (Al-Quran, 14 : 32)

“And He has made subservient to you the sun and the moon pursuing their courses, and He has made subservient to you the night and the day”. (Al-Quran, 14 : 33).

“Allah is He who made subservient to you the sea that the ships may run therein by His Command and that you may seek of His grace”. (Al-Quran, 45 : 13)

So the supremacy of human mind and to utilize the power of intellect and reason was advised by the Holy Quran itself. But Europe, which was in the clutches of superstitions, and irrational impracticable and illogical doctrines of Christianity, when awakened and became acquainted with new sciences and branches of knowledge, initiated to develop materialistic theories and doctrines. Consequently an encouragement to conduct systematic inquiry and an inspiration for investigation and experimentation was the result. Thus there was a constant struggle between the materialistic philosophers and the Christian Church which caused a deeprooted anti attitude against religion. The waves of this kind of abhorance may be seen in the history of Rationalism in Europe. The philosophers opined that nothing can be accepted as true and really existent which can not be seen or perceived with human senses or is not observed, investigated or experimented. The English Philosophers Francis Bacon (1521-1626), the founder of the new materialism and experimental science, French Philosopher Descartes, Rene¹ (1596-1650), Dutch Philosopher, Spinoza (1632-1677), English Philosopher Locke (1632-1704), Hobbes (1588-1679), the notorious critic of miracles David Hume (1711-1776), the celebrated German Philosopher Kant (1724-1804), Voltaire (1694-1778), Karl Marx (1818-1883), Engels (1820-1895), Huxley (1825-1895), Darwin (1809-1882), and so many others—who appear in 17th and 18th and 19th centuries—all preached materialistic philosophies and argued that the thing acceptable must be the only one which is perceptible to human sense. The scholars applied this criterion even to religion. They thought that religion is acceptable only when it is rational and logical and according to the truths of nature. Kant's work “The Religion—in the Limits of Reason Alone” is a good evidence for teaching their trends at that time.

This was the situation which the Christian Church had to face. All defenders of Christian faith came into the field. They found themselves to be incapable of facing this flood of materialism and were forced to adopt apologetic attitude and thus they tried to rationalize their religion and give new interpretations to the teachings of the Bible in general and the miracles in particular.

The Muslims, in the late 19th century and early twentieth century, too, were very much impressed by the Western thought due to two main reasons. Firstly, they were under the direct political influence of western powers through their pseudo scientific attitude, and secondly, they were very much dazzled, by the light of new sciences prevailing in Europe.

This influence, in its climax, can be seen in the commentary of Tantawi Jawhari, the Egyptian scholar, which according to Mr. Baljon, "without much exaggeration—might be qualified as a manual for the general public on biology and other sciences². Allama al-Tantawi, though quite orthodox in creed, gives diagrams and pictorial explanations and explains the Quranic verses in accordance with the scientific thought. He says that Love (of God) is based on knowledge and blames Sufis that they are content with a partial love of God and that they fail in stimulating their disciples to prepare for study of Western and Oriental learning³.

The same influence, in the Indo-Pak subcontinent, though seen in the writings of nearly all the modern commentators of the Quran, is observed in its climax in the works of Allama Muhammad Inayat Allah Khan better known as al-Mashriqi. Some specimens are hereby quoted to show the real force of the waves striking the minds of the muslim scholars. Allama al-Mashriqi regards the western people to be the real believers because of their vast achievement of knowledge :

”فالمفريون هم الذين امنوا بالله على علمهم (اي من كونهم اولى علم) و عملوا الصلحت بايديهم و ارجلهم بالحق فاولئك هم المفلحون“⁴۔

He reproves the muslims who were the real heir of Quranic blessings which, unfortunately, due to their negligence, has been now transferred to the West :

”اے مسلمانان عالم اور اے وقف اجل بدنصیبو! قرآن حکیم تم سے چھین کر دوسری قوموں کو دے دیا گیا ہے! اب مغرب اس کتاب عظیم کا وارث ہے! اس کی صداقتوں پر نہایت تندہی اور انہماک سے چل رہا ہے۔ اس کی اٹل حکمتوں کو نہایت مضبوطی اور قوت سے پکڑے ہوئے ہے“⁵۔

He admires working nations who are endeavouring and making struggle that they are the people who are the believers and will enter paradise :

”العاملون في الجنة والنعيم - الموحدون في زمرة المشركين والمشركون المتعارفون على الارائك متكثرون - والرسول شاهد عليهم انهم هم المومنون الذي هو بالمومنين رؤف رحيم ادخلوا كافة انكم كنتم تفعلون“⁶۔

He, further, under the caption (gives in the contents) ”في ان المغربين هم الذين“ pays tribute to the Westerners who are making researches in the land, in the sea, cultivating lands and wandering through the four corners of the earth and are powerful in the earth and not weak and poor and says that it is the powerful people who are liked by God⁷. He considers that the real knowledge is only that which is scientific and is achieved by senses from the study of Nature :

”ولا شك في ان العلم هو الذي يصدر من دراسته اشياء الطبيعية ومطالعة صحيفة الفطرة باستعمال السمع والابصار والافئدة“⁸۔

The sciences, other than these natural sciences may be named sciences only as flattery while they do not really deserve this name :

”وہ تمام دریافتیں جو صحیفۂ فطرت کے عالموں نے کی ہیں مثلاً علم ریاضی ، علم طبیعیات ، علم طب ، علم طبقات الارض ، علم نجوم ، علم تشریح الابدان وغیرہ وغیرہ - بیسیوں علم جو فطرت کے مشاہدے سے اخذ ہوئے ہیں باقی جو علوم دنیا میں رائج ہیں وہ خوشامد کے طور پر ”علم“ کہے جا سکتے ہیں لیکن وہ فی الحقیقت ظن ہیں“⁹۔

He, further, renders the laws of Holy Quran, to be derived from the Book of Nature and calls scholar one who is scientist :

”ولا شک فی ان ذالک الکتب ہو ما یصدر من دراستہ کتب اللہ اعنی صحیفۃ الفطرۃ و سمی اللہ العلماء اولوالالباب لکونہم متفکرین فی خلق سموتہ وارضہ لیعلموا قانونہ“¹⁰۔

Indicating the verse 21 : 105, that “My righteous servants shall inherit the land”, he opines :

”اگر قرآن کہتا ہے کہ زمین کے وارث صالح لوگ ہیں تو جو قومیں زمین کی اس وقت وارث ہیں اس نسبت سے جس قدر وہ وارث ہیں ، صالح ہیں یا اگر قرآن کہتا ہے کہ کافر کو ہمیشہ شکست اور مومن کو ہمیشہ فتح ہے تو جس قوم کو شکست مل رہی ہے وہ کافر اور جس کو فتح ہو رہی ہے وہ اسی نسبت سے مومن ہے - گویا قرآن کا تعلق صرف مسلمانوں کی موجودہ ملت سے نہیں سب سے ہے اور سب قرآن کی مخاطب ہیں“¹¹۔

Two very interesting explanations are cited to show how the unconscious or overconscious effect of the word “nature” dominates in the ideas of our great scholar. Explaining 32 : 16, that “their sides draw away from (their) beds”, he states :

”وہ (تلاش آیات میں اس قدر محو ہوتے ہیں) کہ ان کے پہلو بستروں سے نا آشنا ہوتے ہیں . . . کوئی متنفس نہیں جانتا کہ (خالق زمین و آسمان کی اس عظیم فطرت کی تلاش میں) کیا آنکھوں کو ٹھنڈک دینے والے انعام (یعنی دنیا کی وہ حیرت انگیز علمی ایجادات جنہوں نے دنیا کو آنکھوں کی ٹھنڈک بنا دیا ہے) ان کے واسطے ان کے عمدہ عمل کی پاداش میں چھپا دیئے گئے ہیں“¹²۔

Discussing 48 : 29 that ‘their marks are in their faces because of the effect of prostration’ he explains that they are pale due to the unbroken study of Nature :

”محمد کے پیرووں کی ایک خصوصیت یہ ہے کہ ان کے چہروں سے (فی وجوہہم) نہ کہ ماتھوں سے جیسا کہ مولوی صاحبان اپنے ماتھوں پر سجدوں کے نشان رگڑ رگڑ کر ڈال لیتے ہیں اور مومن بننا چاہتے ہیں) ہاں ! ہاں ! ان کے چہروں سے (یعنی ان کے حلیے سے بلکہ ان کے روز و شب کے عمل سے) ہی صاف ظاہر ہوتا ہے کہ وہ اس صحیفۂ فطرت کے دین کو اپنا راہ نما ہمیشہ کے لئے تسلیم کر چکے ہیں“¹³۔

It is noticeable that our great scholar, being a lover of Nature, regards David, himself, to be a scientist who developed his country and made the mountains and birds subservient to him only to strengthen his nation and country :

”و سمي الله داؤد ذاليد لكون عمالا و بناء في ملكه ولانه عمر ارضه اشد عمارة و مدن المدائن و اشاع العمران في ملكه و سخر الجبال و الطير لتقوية قومه و تشديد ملكه“¹⁴۔

When a prophet is regarded as scientist, the prophethood may, very easily, be deduced to be the scientific knowledge, so discussing 6 : 89, he overshoots the mark :

”ان تمام روشن شہادتوں سے ظاہر ہے کہ انبیاء کے دور کے بعد بھی حکومت علم اور (صحیفہ کائنات سے انتہائی باخبر یعنی) نبوت کا اقوام عالم کو سپرد کیا جانا اٹل ہے اور وہ وہی قومیں ہیں جو خدا کے قانون سے اور فاطر زمین و آسمان کی معرفت سے پورے طور پر باخبر ہونے کی سعی کر رہی ہیں انہی قوموں کا علم نبوت (یعنی انتہائی خبر) کے مدارج تک پہنچ رہا ہے قطعی طور پر واضح ہے کہ خدا کو اپنی وحی بلکہ حکم بلکہ نبوت بھی کسی قوم کے سپرد کرنے میں ادنیٰ قسم کا دریغ نہیں اور انہی معنوں میں تمام قرآن - تمام دنیا کی حکومت اور تمام نبوت آج مغرب کی قوموں میں منتقل ہو چکی ہیں - فتدبر“¹⁵۔

Lastly his ‘verdict’ to define the “true religion” is cited :

”اگر قوم بلند اس طرح پر ہو سکتی ہے کہ بڑی بڑی ایجادیں کی جائیں تو حضرت سلیمان کی طرح ہوا کو مسخر کیا جائے - حضرت داؤد کی طرح زرہین بنائی جائیں یا اگر تقاضائے وقت اس طرح پر ہو کہ ایٹم بم بنایا جائے یا چاند کی سرزمین تک پہنچا جائے (یا کوہ ہمالیہ کی چوٹی ابورسٹ کو سر کیا جائے) تو یہ سب چیزیں کی جائیں کیوں کہ یہ سب دین الحق ہے ! دین محمد ہے ، دین خدا ہے وغیرہ وغیرہ مزا یہ ہے کہ دین محمد اب تورات اور انجیل والوں نے بھی پھر اختیار کر لیا ہے - مسلمانوں کے پاس صرف قرآن کے ورق رہ گئے اور وحی جو در حقیقت قوموں کے سینوں میں ہوا کرتی ہے انگریزوں اور امریکنوں کے ملک میں پہنچ گئی ہے“¹⁶۔

We have seen, that a leader who inspired thousands of people, himself, is found to be much inspired by the Western flash of light !

Sir Sayyid determines the strength of the Holy Quran from the formidable Laws of Nature :

”میری سمجھ میں خدائے پاک کا کلام ایسا ہوتا نہیں ہے بلکہ جیسا کہ اس کا قانون قدرت مستحکم اور مضبوط ہے - ویسا ہی اس کا کلام مضبوط ہے“¹⁷۔

It is not strange that our modern exegesis is included with the influence of western thought. If we go through the various commentaries of the Holy Quran written in different centuries we will come to conclude that in each age the color

of their civilization, intellectual movements and even the bent of mind of the commentator himself, has dyed the exegetic work of that age :

”من المعلوم ان الشخص الذى يفسر نصا من النصوص . يلون هذا النص بتفسيره اياه لان المتفهم لعبارة من العبارات هو الذى يحدد معناها و مرادها وفق مستوا الفكرى“¹⁸۔

Mr. Muhammad Hussain al-Dhahabi, in his famous work—”التفسير والمفسرون“—has illumined this idea nicely that specialization and expertness of the commentator in some field does color his exegesis :

”وانا لنلاحظ فى وضوح وجلاء۔ ان كل من برع فى فن من فنون العلم يكاد يقتصر تفسيره على الفن الذى برع فيه“¹⁹۔

He says that a grammarian will, generally, lay stress on grammar :

”فالنحوى تراه لاهم له الاعراب و ذكر ما يحتفل فى ذلك من اوجه و تراه ينقل مسائل النحو و فروعها و خلافياته و ذلك كالزجاج و الواحدى فى البسيط و ابى حيان فى البحر المحيط“²⁰۔

But a rationalist according to his mode of thought will cite the various opinions of philosophers and his commentary will be, consequently, philosophical one :

”و صاحب العلوم العقلية تراه يعنى فى تفسيره باقوال الحكماء و الفلاسفة - كما تراه يعنى بذكر شبههم والرد عليها و ذلك كالفخر الرازى فى كتابه مفاتيح الغيب“²¹۔

Similarly, a jurist will deduce injunctions from the Quranic verses and explain according to his own manner :

”و صاحب الفقه تراه قد عنى بتقريره الادلة للمفروع الفقهيّة . والرد على من يخالف مذهبه و ذلك كالجصاص و القرطبي“²²۔

Commentaries of the Holy Quran by al-Thalabi and al-Khazin mostly narrate historical events :

”و صاحب التاريخ ، ليس له شغل الا القصاص - و ذكر اخبار من سلف ما صح منها وما لا يصح - وذلك كالثعلبي و الخازن“²³۔

Al-Dhahabi, further mentions the commentators who are innovators in religion, that they had made far-fetched and heretic interpretations :

”و صاحب البدع - ليس له قصة الا ان يؤول كلام الله وينزله على مذهبه الفاسد وذلك كالرمانى و الجبائى و القاضى عبد الجبار - والزمخشري من المعتزلة و الطبرسى . و ملا محسن الكاشى من الامامية الاثنى عشرية“²⁴۔

The muslim mystics while commenting on the Quranic verses, were not an exception. They have also tried to harmonize the exegesis according to their own bent of mind :

”و اصحاب التصوف قصدوا الى ناحية الترغيب والترهيب واستخراج المعاني الاشارية من الايات القرانية بما يتفق مع مشاربهم و يتناسب مع رياضتهم و مواجيدهم - و من هؤلاء ابن عربي و ابو عبد الرحمن السلمي²⁵ -

Concluding the discussion he says :

”و هكذا فسر كل صاحب فن او مذهب بما يتناسب مع فنه او يشهد لمذهبه و قد استمرت هذه النزعة العلمية العقلية و راجت في بعض العصور و اوجا عظيما“²⁶ -

Commentaries of the Holy Quran, in the modern period have the color of scientific discoveries and much energy is spent to prove them by the application of the Quranic verses so as to show that all these sciences were foretold by the Holy Quran ; and that it is one of the miraculous characteristics of the Holy Quran. Dhahabi says :

”كما راجت في عصرنا الحاضر تفسيرات يريد اهلها من ورائها ان يحملوا آيات القرآن كل العلوم ما ظهر منها و ما لم يظهر - كان هذا فيما يبدو وجه من وجوه اعجاز القرآن و صلاحية لان يتمشى مع الزمن - و في الحق ان هذا غلو منهم و اسراف يخرج القرآن عن مقصده الذي نزل من اجله“²⁷ -

But instead of the various colors found in various commentaries we observe that all commentaries, whether their characteristic is grammatical or philosophical, juristic or mystic, historical or rationalistic, even the commentary—al-Kashshaf, written by the most rationalistic mutazilite, al-Zamakhshari, nearly all old commentaries cite the miracle stories—mentioned in the Holy Quran—to be real facts—and not cited allegorically. But in the modern commentaries as we have seen in Chapter V obviously, the modern commentators have tried to :

1. Minimise or
2. Negate or
3. Refute the miracle stories of the Holy Quran.

The commentators, to justify their deviation from the normal orthodox point of view, have supported their views by inserting into brackets small and sometimes long sentences to harmonize the translation of the Holy text with their own—formulated opinion as we have observed in the translation of Maulvi Abdullah Chakralwi, Khawja Ahmad Din Bashiruddin Mahmood and Parvez. Parvez has also tried to color the facts with his florid style of expression. Another support, which is generally utilized by these commentators is to select the uncommon or metaphorical meaning of the concerned word and thus lexical support is exploited. The word ضرب i.e. to strike, is translated by Sir Sayyid²⁸, Maulvi Abdullah²⁹, Dr. Abdul Hakim³⁰ to mean to walk-to go, to climb. Similarly the word ”عصا“ to mean rod has been rendered in English to be ”community“ by Maulvi

Abdullah³¹, Maulvi Mummad Ali³² and Pervez³³. Maulvi Muhammad Ali, translating 7 : 117, makes use of this lexical armour to chisel the meaning of فاذا ما يافكون as such :

“Lo : it devoured the lies they told”³⁴.

Again translating 20 : 66

(فاذا حبالهم و عصيهم يخيل اليه من سحرهم انها تسعى) -

he overshoots the mark and deviating from the obvious sense of the text, says :

“The forces of untruth appear to carry the day for a while, but are soon vanquished. As to what was the nature of these cords and rods and what is meant by their running Both the word ‘asa’ and ‘habal’ are used in the Arabic language metaphorically, (some lexical examples are cited in support) if “ما يافكون” or the lies they told, expresses the true nature of the cords and the rods, the use of the two words clearly corroborates this conclusion. And an eloquent speech is called Sihr, or enchantment, the very word used here”³⁵.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah explains the verses in a very interesting manner :

”موسیٰ نے کہا کہ تم ہی پہلے بیان کرو۔ بس جب انہوں نے تقریریں کیں تو حیران و دنگ کر دیا۔ حاضرین مجلس کو اور دہشت و رعب میں ڈال دیا۔ ان سب کو کیوں کہ انہوں نے اس وقت بہت ہی بڑا بھاری باطل تودہ طوفان بیان کیا پھر ہم نے حکم بھیجا موسیٰ کی طرف یہ کہ اب تو بیان کر اپنی نذارت کا ہر ایک مسئلہ پس ناگاہ وہ ہر ایک مسئلہ ملیا میٹ کر گیا۔ ان کے سارے باطل بیان کو“²⁶۔

He, further, discussing 20 : 18 and explaining “و ما تلتک یمینک یا موسیٰ”

says :

”کیسے نظر آئے ہیں یہ عالیشان احکام میرے تیری مبارک سمجھ میں اے موسیٰ۔ اس نے عرض کیا کہ یہ ایک مسئلہ میری نذارت کا ہے۔ میں خود ہی پورا پورا عمل درآمد اور مدار رسالت رکھوں گا۔ ان پر ضرور ہی شائع و جاری کروں گا۔ میں یہ کل مسائل اپنے تابعداروں میں بھی کیوں کہ ضرور ہی مجھ کو ان کے سبب سے طرح طرح کے فوائد و درجات جنت الفردوس مرزوق و موہوب ہوں گے۔ ارشاد ہوا کہ ہاں اب جا کر تو سنا پڑھا اے موسیٰ پس موسیٰ نے ان مسئلوں کو سنائے پڑھائے کی نسبت اپنے دل میں سوچا سمجھا کہ میں کس طرح جا کر بیان کروں گا۔ پس ناگاہ اس کو اپنے دل میں موہوم ہوئے وہ مسائل بڑے سانپ کی مانند جو کہ دوڑتا ہوا آ رہا ہو۔ فرمایا علیم بذات الصدور نے کہ جا عمل درآمد کر ان کی اشاعت اجرا میں اور ہر گز مت ڈر کسی سے۔ ضرور ہی پھیر دیں گے ہم ان کو تیری پہلی اطمینان والی حالت ہی میں۔ پھر جب بشارت کے احکام صادر ہوئے تو ارشاد ہوا کہ پہلے

مسائل لذارت کے بعد ان مسائل بشارت کو بھی جا کر سنانا اور پڑھانا کیوں کہ تمام حاضرین مجالس کو یہ مسائل بشارت ظاہر یاہر طور پر بہت ہی خوش اور روشن نظر آئیں گے۔ ہر گزان سے ان کو ذرہ بھر بھی غصہ و جوش نہیں آئے گا کیوں کہ یہ بشارت کے مسائل اور ہی ڈھنگ کے ہیں“³⁷۔

From this long piece of translation which has been cited only to show how the translation of Quranic verses was moulded according to the preformulated opinion of the commentator. He regarded the miracle of rod (rendered into serpent), being even the visionary meaning as cited by others, mere psychological fancy. Further, he rendered the miracle of rod as injunctions of warning and the miracle of white hand to be injunctions of glad tidings. But still the worthy scholar made the translation keeping the text related to the explanation. But we see a further development in this exegesis by his follower. Parvez, being not original but elaborating the idea of Maulvi Abdullah Chakralwi, in connection with 7 : 106-108, translates as such :

”فرعون نے کہا کہ اگر تم خدا کی طرف سے کوئی واضح دلیل لائے ہو تو اسے اپنے دعوے کی صداقت میں پیش کرو۔ اس پر سوسلی نے ان قوانین و دلائل کو پیش کیا جن کی بنا پر اس نے وہ دعویٰ کیا تھا اور جنہیں وہ نہایت مضبوطی سے تھامے ہوئے تھا۔ یہ محکم دلائل اپنی صداقت کے زور دروں پر۔ اس طرح آگے بڑھتے چلے جاتے تھے کہ ان کی قوت اور شدت واضح طور پر سامنے آ رہی تھی“³⁸۔

Some further examples showing the distortion of the explanation of Quranic verses are cited. Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah Chakralwi, translating 3 : 49 tries to mould the meanings of text to prove that all mention of miracles of Jesus is metaphorically :

”تحقیق میں لاپا تمہارے پاس ہر ایک عظیم الشان حکم تمہارے پروردگار کی طرف سے اس لئے کہ تحقیق میں درست کروں واسطے تمہارے اچھی طرح سے تمہاری فطرت و خلقت کو مثل درست کرنے حالت چار مخصوص شکاری پرندوں کے (باز۔ باشہ۔ شاہین۔ چرخ) کے یعنی ایمانی روح پھونکوں بیچ فطرت تمہاری کے پس وہ فرمانبردار ہو جائے اللہ تعالیٰ کی۔ مثل فرمانبردار ہونے ان چاروں مخصوص شکاری پرندوں کے۔ (اور میں یہ سب کچھ کروں) مطابق ارشاد کتاب اللہ کے اور میں بینا کروں ایمانی اندھوں کو اور خالص نرالا مومن بناؤں میں ایمانی پہلبہری والوں کو خصوصاً زندہ کروں میں ایمانی مردوں کو مطابق ارشاد کتاب اللہ کے اور اللہ تعالیٰ کی طرف سے پہنچاؤں تم کو حل و حرمت کے احکام کہ جن چیزوں کا کھانا تم کو حلال ہو اور جن چیزوں کا تم کو ذخیرہ کرنا جائز ہو انہیں گھروں میں“³⁹۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim, explaining 5 : 110, cites the same opinion :

“This is a figurative expression of the spiritual elevation and quickening which was imparted to men of abilities by the company and teachings of Jesus⁴⁰ This is a figurative expression meaning the imparting of spiritual life to those who were devoid of it”⁴¹.

Khawja Ahmad Din, introducing same scientific facts,, and with the support of some Biblical teachings (not related to these events), explains the miracles of Jesus in a different way :

”بلا شبہ میں تمہارے (اعلیٰ بنانے اور تم کو ترقی دینے کے لئے) تمہاری طین سے (اس میں ال عوض مضاف الیہ کے ہے) انسان (طین سے ہی پیدا ہوتا ہے جو اس کی گری ہوئی مادی حالت کو دکھاتی ہے) ایک ایسی کیفیت پیدا کرتا ہوں جو پرندہ کے حال کی مانند ہوتی ہے (یعنی جس طرح پرندہ انڈے سے ایک بے بال و پر صورت تیار کرتا ہے جو آڑ تو نہیں سکتی لیکن اس میں آڑنے کی استعداد اور قابلیت پیدا ہو جاتی ہے۔ اس طرح میں تمہیں تعلیم کے ذریعے آڑنے کا شوق دلاتا ہوں پھر اس مستعد اور قابل مٹی)⁴² میں (محبت کو درجہ بدرجہ نفع کرتا اور (بھر دیتا) ہوں۔ تو وہ اللہ کے حکم کے مطابق آڑنے والی (یعنی روحانی حالت) بن جاتی ہے اور یہود سوختنی قربانی کو خدا تعالیٰ کی غذا سمجھتے تھے اور احبار ناقص الخلقہ لوگوں کے ذریعے ان کا بجا لانا جائز نہیں جانتے تھے۔ ان کو جماعت سے بھی الگ رکھتے تھے۔ پھر جب وہ کبھی کسی عیب سے پاک ہو جاتے تھے تو ان پر کفاروں کا بوجھ اور دین ڈالتے تھے۔ تب انہیں اپنے میں شامل کرتے تھے لیکن حضرت مسیح کا ارشاد ہے کہ⁴³ میں مادر زاد اندھے اور سفید داغ والے کو پاک ٹھہراتا ہوں (اور ان کے کفاروں سے انہیں بری قرار دیتا ہوں) اور (بوں تمہارے) مردوں کو زندگی بخشتا ہوں اور تمہیں اس (مال) کے ساتھ خبردار کرتا ہوں جو تم کھاتے ہو اور جو تم گھروں میں ذخیرہ کرتے ہو (کہ وہ درست طرح سے حاصل نہیں کیا جاتا)“⁴⁴۔

We have seen how the worthy scholar has spent his energies to insert long sentences in brackets to set it in accord with his preformulated opinion that there had been no mention of miracles in these verses.

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood nearly repeats the opinion of Khawja Ahmad Din :

”میں تمہارے (فائدہ کے) لئے بعض طینی خصلت رکھنے والوں سے پرندہ (کے پیدا کرنے) کی طرح (مخلوق) پیدا کروں گا (انسانوں میں سے روحانی قابلیت کے لوگوں کو اپنی تربیت میں لے کر ایک دن اس قابل بنا دیتا ہوں کہ وہ خدا تعالیٰ کی طرف روحانی پرواز کرنے والے بن جاتے ہیں۔ یہ مراد نہیں کہ میں خدا بن جاؤں گا اور نہ یہ مراد ہے کہ زندہ پرندے پیدا کروں گا۔

یہود کو حکم تھا کہ اندھوں اور مبروص کو ناپاک سمجھیں (احبار باب ۱۲ و باب ۲۱) مسیح سے اللہ تعالیٰ نے اس ظلم کا ازالہ کروایا۔ اس کو اس جگہ بیان کیا گیا ہے۔ لوگوں نے غلطی سے یہ سمجھ لیا کہ مادر زاد اندھوں اور مبروص کو وہ اچھا کرتے تھے۔ حالانکہ مادر زاد کے الفاظ قرآن میں نہیں اور موتیا بند کے مریضوں اور مبروصوں کو عام طور پر ڈاکٹر اور حکیم اچھا کرتے رہتے ہیں۔۔۔۔ میں تم کو ان نیک کاموں کی خبر دوں گا جن کے کرنے سے انسان اللہ تعالیٰ کا مقرب بن جاتا ہے“⁴⁵۔

Parvez is very fortunate to have much of the material by his predecessors. In his florid style he seems to impart philosophical message to a nation though the same idea is repeated and the translation becomes quite “pure” from any miraculous element :

”وہ اس مردہ قوم سے کہے گا کہ میں تمہارے نشو و نما دینے والے کی طرف سے زندگی بخش پیغام لے کر آیا ہوں۔ میں ”اس وحی کے ذریعے“ تمہیں ایسی حیات نو عطا کروں گا جس سے تم اپنی موجودہ پستی (خاک نشینی) سے ابھر کر فضا کی بلندیوں میں اڑنے کے قابل ہو جاؤ گے اور اس طرح تمہیں فکر و عمل کی رفعتیں نصیب ہو جائیں گی۔

یہ آسمانی روشنی۔ تمہاری بے نور آنکھوں کو ایسی بصیرت عطا کر دے گی جس سے تم زندگی کے صحیح راستے پر چلنے کے قابل ہو جاؤ گے۔

اس سے تمہاری قوم کی ویران کھیتی۔ جس پر تر و تازگی کا کوئی نشان باقی نہیں رہا۔ پھر سے سر سبز و شاداب ہو جائے گی۔ تمہاری وہ کمینہ خصلتیں دور ہو جائیں گی جن کی وجہ سے تمہیں کوئی اپنے پاس پھٹکنے نہیں دیتا۔ مختصراً یہ کہ ذلت و خواری کی وہ موت جو اس وقت تم پر چاروں طرف سے چھا رہی ہے ایک نئی زندگی میں بدل جائے گی۔

میں (تمہارے موجودہ نظام سرمایہ داری کی جگہ) ایسا نظام قائم کروں گا جو اس کا جائزہ لیتا رہے گا کہ تم کھانے پینے کی چیزوں میں سے کس قدر اپنے مصرف میں لاتے ہو اور کس قدر ذخیرہ (Hoarding) کرتے ہو۔ کہ اس سے ناجائز نفع کمایا جائے۔

اس قانون اور اور نظام میں تمہارے لیے باز آفرینی (ایک نئی زندگی حاصل کر لینے) کی بہت بڑی نشانی ہے“⁴⁶۔

The development in modern exegesis can be estimated easily. Any muslim scholar, who is not well aware of the background of such translations, cannot perceive the above passage to be related with the exegesis of the Quranic verses. Discussing 27 : 16-21, Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah Chakralwi explains “نملہ” i.e., an ant, to be a queen Namla, and “ہد ہد” (meaning a bird having numerous lines and colours)⁴⁷ to be a man given this name. Again in 21 : 79 he translates “جبال” (mountains) to be the hilly people :

”یہاں تک کہ آ پہنچے نعل قوم کے شہر پر ان کی شہزادی (ملکہ) نملہ اے یہ حکم دیا کہ اے میرے تمام لوگو۔۔۔ تاکہ بیگاری پکڑ کر نہ لے جاوے تم کو سلیمان اور لشکر ان کا۔ کیوں کہ لشکری لوگ بیگار پکڑنے کے وقت بڑے چھوٹے لوگوں میں تمیز نہیں کرتے۔۔۔ مجھے نظر نہیں آتا ہد ہد آدمی“⁴⁸۔

”فرمانبردار بنا رکھا تھا ہم نے داؤد کے ساتھ پہاڑی لوگوں کو بھی۔ ان کی جماعت بھی قرانی نمازیں پڑھتی رہتی تھیں“⁴⁹ اور قوم طیر بھی ہماری فرمانبردار تھی اور لوگوں کو بھی اس کے ساتھ ہم نے اپنا فرمانبردار بنا لیا“⁵⁰۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim repeats the same interpretation :

“Figuratively the mountains may signify the hilly tribes, and the birds, the chiefs or poets”⁵¹.

Explaining “Hudhud” he links it with a chief Hadad, referred in the Bible :

“Hadad, a captain of the hosts had turned an adversary to Solomon as appears from kings 11-17 The Hudhud of the Quran is either the same as Hadad of the Bible or some other person of high responsibilities in the armies of Solomon”⁵².

Maulvi Muhammad Ali, nearly, repeats the same translations :

”یہ کوئی قوم تھی جن کو علم ہوا کہ حضرت سلیمان اپنی افواج کے ساتھ آ رہے ہیں تو انہوں نے کہا۔ ایسا نہ ہو کہ ہم خواہ مخواہ مخالف سمجھ کر مارے جائیں اور گھروں میں داخل ہو جانا اس بات کا نشان ہے کہ ان کا ارادہ مقابلہ کا نہیں بلکہ فرمانبرداری کا ہے“⁵³۔

Citing his opinion about “Hudhud” he concludes :

”یہ ساری مشکلات اس بات کا نتیجہ ہیں کہ ہد ہد سے مراد یہاں پرند ہد ہد لیا جاتا ہے حالانکہ اس کا جو کچھ ذکر یہاں آیا ہے وہ صاف بتاتا ہے کہ وہ انسان تھا“⁵⁴۔

The nature of tasbih has been discovered :

”پہاڑوں کا مسخر ہونا اور تسبیح کرنا اس معنی میں ہے کہ وہاں پر حضرت داؤد کی حکومت قائم ہو گئی اور ان کی تسبیح سے مراد ان پہاڑی قوموں کا تسبیح کرنا ہے جو ظاہری اور باطنی دونوں رنگوں میں حضرت داؤد کے ساتھ ہو گئیں“⁵⁵۔

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood is not different from his predecessors in the explanation of these verses though he has further developed it and tried to harmonize it with the literal sense of the text :

”اور ہم نے داؤد کے ساتھ اہل جبال کو بھی اور پرندوں کو بھی کام پر لگا دیا تھا۔ وہ سب خدا کی تسبیح کرتے تھے اور ہم یہ سب کچھ کرنے پر قادر تھے“⁵⁶۔

Explaining 27 : 18-19 he says :

”یہاں تک کہ جب وہ وادی‘ نملہ میں پہنچ (ہم دوسری جگہ لکھ چکے ہیں کہ طیر کے معنی آسمانی پرواز کرنے والے لوگوں (یعنی برگزیدہ لوگوں) کے ہوتے ہیں۔ وہی معنی اس جگہ پرندوں کے ہیں تو نملہ قوم میں سے ایک شخص نے کہا اے نملہ قوم۔ اپنے اپنے گھروں میں چلے جاؤ ایسا نہ ہو کہ سلیمان اور اس کا لشکر (تمہارے حالات کو) نہ جانتے ہوئے تمہیں پیروں کے نیچے مسل دیں“⁵⁷۔

Parvez, further elaborates the same ideas. Discussing 21 : 79-80 he says :

”اور داؤد کی سلطنت کی قوت اور وسعت کا یہ عالم تھا کہ (ہم نے وہاں قبائل کے بڑے بڑے سرداروں کو اور قبیلہ طیر کے شہسواروں کو (جن سے گھوڑوں کے رسالے ترتیب پائے تھے) اس کے ساتھ کام میں لگا رکھا تھا اور وہ اپنے اپنے فرائض کی سرانجام دہی میں سرگرداں رہتے تھے۔ اور یہ ہمارے پروگرام مشیت کے عین مطابق تھا“⁵⁸۔

Translating 27 : 17-18 he cites a background in brackets for the visit of Solomon to justify his explanation :

”(ایک دفعہ کا ذکر ہے کہ سلیمان کو معلوم ہوا کہ سبا کی مملکت اس کے خلاف سرکش کا ارادہ رکھتی ہے چنانچہ وہ ”بطور حفظ ما تقدم“ اس کی طرف لشکر لے کر روانہ ہوا راستے میں وادی‘ نملہ پڑتی تھی۔ ملک سبا کی طرح اس ملک کی سربراہ بھی ایک عورت تھی) جب اس نے اس لشکر کی آمد کی خبر سنی تو اپنی رعایا کو حکم دیا کہ وہ اپنے اپنے گھروں میں جا کر پناہ گزین ہو جائیں۔ ایسا نہ ہو کہ یہ لشکر جرار اتنا معلوم کئے بغیر کہ تم اس کے دشمن کی قوم سے کسی قسم کا تعلق رکھتے ہو یا نہیں تمہیں یوں ہی کچل ڈالے (فوجیں یہی کچھ کیا کرتی ہیں۔ ان کے راستے سے ہٹ جانا ہی قرین مصلحت ہوتا ہے)“⁵⁹۔

Miracle of Fire becoming comfort and peace to Abraham is explained allegorically by modern commentators. Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah tells :

”حکام نے کہا کہ سخت مارو پیٹو اور ایذا دو اس کو اس کو اس غرض سے کہ اپنے بزرگوں کا بدلہ لو۔ اگر اس کو کسی قسم کی سزا دینی چاہتے ہو۔ ارادہ کیا ہم نے یہ کہ اسے آگ فتنہ کی بدستور ثابت رہو تو بالکل سرد اور ہر طرح سلامت ابراہیم کے حق میں“⁶⁰۔

The commentator has very boldly translated ”حرقوہ“ as دو اور ایذا دو and further inserted ”فتنہ“ without the support of any bracket in the textual translation. Maulvi Muhammad Ali, in his English translation has translated 21 : 68-70 as such :

”They said ; Burn him and help your Gods, if you are going to do (anything). We said : O fire ! be a comfort and peace to Abraham ; And they desired a war on him, but We made them the greatest losers“⁶¹.

It is noticeable that he has not made any change in the translation of first two verses while in the third, he using the word 'war', has refuted the miraculous element of the event.

In his Urdu translation he says :

”اگر ہم قرآن کریم کے بیان سے آگے نہ نکلیں تو ہم نہیں کہہ سکتے کہ آیا فی الواقع حضرت ابراہیم کو اس آگ میں ڈالا گیا جیسا کہ انجہ اللہ من النار سے ظاہر ہے اللہ تعالیٰ نے اپنی کمال حکمت سے حضرت ابراہیم کو آگ میں پڑنے سے پہلے نجات دے دی اور کسی دوسری طرف نکال دیا“⁶².

It is obvious how boldly our worthy scholar has neglected the Quranic verse ”مخالفین نے ارادہ کیا کہ ابراہیم کے خلاف آتش جنگ بھڑکا دیں اور اپنے معبودوں کی کچھ حمایت کریں۔ مخالفین و منکرین نے جب یہ ارادہ کیا تو اللہ تعالیٰ نے اپنے بندے ابراہیم کو بچانے کے لئے اس نار کو کہہ دیا ینار کونی بردا و سلاماً علی ابراہیم وہ آگ یا آتش جنگ تھی بہر حال ابراہیم پر ٹھنڈی ہو گئی“⁶³.

We hear the same echo in the explanation cited by Yaqub Ali Turab Ahmadi, Editor, al-Hakam, Qadian, as follows :

”ان کے پاس ابراہیم کے ان دلائل کا جواب اس کے سوا کیا تھا جو ہر دھاندلی باز گروہ کا جواب ہوتا ہے ! انہوں نے عوام کو مشتعل کیا اور کہا کہ اگر تم میں کچھ ہمت ہے تو آٹھو۔ اور اس شخص کو جس نے تمہارے معبودوں کے ساتھ یہ حرکت کی ہے زندہ جلا دو اور اس طرح اپنے دیوتاؤں کا بول بالا کر دو۔ وہ ابراہیم کے خلاف عداوت اور انتقام کی آگ کو یوں بھڑکا رہے تھے اور ہم ایسا انتظام کر رہے تھے کہ اس آگ کے شعلے سرد پڑ جائیں اور وہ ابراہیم کو کوئی گزند نہ پہنچا سکیں۔ چنانچہ انہوں نے اس سلسلے میں ابراہیم کے خلاف جو تدبیر سوچی تھی ہم نے ایسے بیکار کر دیا“⁶⁴.

Parvez repeats the same translation though in a beautiful language :

”ان کے پاس ابراہیم کے ان دلائل کا جواب اس کے سوا کیا تھا جو ہر دھاندلی باز گروہ کا جواب ہوتا ہے ! انہوں نے عوام کو مشتعل کیا اور کہا کہ اگر تم میں کچھ ہمت ہے تو آٹھو۔ اور اس شخص کو جس نے تمہارے معبودوں کے ساتھ یہ حرکت کی ہے زندہ جلا دو اور اس طرح اپنے دیوتاؤں کا بول بالا کر دو۔ وہ ابراہیم کے خلاف عداوت اور انتقام کی آگ کو یوں بھڑکا رہے تھے اور ہم ایسا انتظام کر رہے تھے کہ اس آگ کے شعلے سرد پڑ جائیں اور وہ ابراہیم کو کوئی گزند نہ پہنچا سکیں۔ چنانچہ انہوں نے اس سلسلے میں ابراہیم کے خلاف جو تدبیر سوچی تھی ہم نے ایسے بیکار کر دیا“⁶⁴.

We have seen how dramatically the translator has avoided mention of miracle and told it allegorically.

Further, regarding the rendering asunder of the moon by the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H., Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah says :

”قریب آنے والی ہے قیامت اور اس سے پہلے پھٹ کر بالکل فنا و معدوم ہو جائے گا۔ یہ چاند وغیرہ ہر ایک ستارہ بھی اور اگر دیکھیں منکرین قیامت کوئی قرآنی بیان قیامت کا تو اس سے منہ پھیر لیتے اور یہ کہنے لگتے ہیں یہ تو سراسر ایک باطل وہم و خیال ہے جو کہ عوام الناس میں پھیل رہا ہے“⁶⁵.

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood, refuting its nature of miraculous, interprets it to be a symbol of Arab power :

”عربوں کے نزدیک چاند عرب حکومت کا نشان تھا پس چاند پھٹنے اور عرب کی تباہی آ جانے کے ایک معنی یہ ہیں کہ ماعنا یعنی عرب کی تباہی کی ساعت آ گئی ہے اور چاند یعنی عرب کی حکومت کا عروج پاش پاش ہو گیا ہے - مفسرین نے غلطی سے اس کے یہ معنی کئے ہیں کہ رسول کریم نے ایک دفعہ یہ معجزہ دکھایا تھا“⁶⁶

He further argues that it was never a miracle and no companion of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. ever attested it :

”یہ غلط ہے - اگر ایسا ہوتا تو عرب کے سب حصوں میں اور دنیا کے سب حصوں میں ایسا نظر آتا بلکہ نظام شمسی تباہ ہو جاتا کیوں کہ وہ اسی صورت میں قائم رہ سکتا ہے جب کہ اس کے سب سیارے اپنی اپنی جگہ پر ٹھیک رہیں - پھر کسی صحابی نے بھی جو اسی وقت مجلس میں ہو یا مکہ یا عرب کے کسی اور مقام پر ہو اس کی شہادت نہیں دی کہ چاند جسمانی طور پر پھٹ گیا تھا - علاوہ ازیں چاند کے پھٹنے کا قیامت سے کوئی تعلق نہیں“⁶⁷

Parvez copies the ideas of Bashiruddin Mahmood instead of following the interpretation cited by Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah :

”وہ انقلاب کی گھڑی (جس کے متعلق ان سے اتنی مدت سے کہا جا رہا تھا) بالکل قریب آ پہنچی ہے - اب ان مخالفین عرب کی قوت و شوکت ختم ہو جائے گی اور ان کا پرچم (جس پر قمر کا نشان ہے) ٹکڑے ٹکڑے ہو جائے گا -

اس آنے والے انقلاب کی کئی علامات ان کے سامنے آ چکی ہیں - لیکن ان کی سرکشی اور مدہوشی کا یہ عالم ہے کہ یہ ان پر سنجیدگی سے غور ہی نہیں کرتے بلکہ آٹھے منہ پھیر کر چل دیتے ہیں اور کہہ دیتے ہیں کہ یہ سب وہی جھوٹے افسانے ہیں جنہیں ہم ایک عرصہ سے سنتے چلے آ رہے ہیں“⁶⁸

Iqbal Khanam is confused on this issue. Commenting on 54 : 1 she says :

”شق القمر کا نشان خدا نے اہل عرب کو دکھایا بطور ایک پیشین گوئی کے - کیوں کہ اہل عرب کا جو قومی یا ملکی نشان قمر تھا خدا نے دکھایا کہ یہ نشان ٹوٹ جائے گا شق القمر کا واقعہ تو ظہور میں ضرور آیا خواہ کسی رنگ میں ہو - خدا کو بڑی بڑی قدرتیں حاصل ہیں“⁶⁹

She, further, adds a scientific outlook :

”اجرام فلکی کے ماہر بھی یہ کہتے ہیں کہ چاند کے درمیان میں ایک سرے سے دوسرے سرے تک ایک دراڑ سی نظر آتی ہے گویا ٹوٹ کر پھر آپس میں جڑ گیا ہے“⁷⁰

But in the introduction of her commentary she refutes its happening :

”ہم تو چاند کو گول اور ثابت ہی دیکھ رہے ہیں۔ پھٹ گیا تھا تو اسے پھٹا ہی رہنا چاہئیے تھا“⁷¹۔

Further it is concluded :

”حقیقت میں یہ شق القمر کا معجزہ صرف کفار عرب کے قومی نشان چاند کی طرف ہی ہو سکتا ہے مگر مجھے اس سے بحث نہیں جس طرح چاہو سمجھو“⁷²۔

It is very strange to note that nearly all the modern commentators while negated or refuted the miracle stories of the Holy Quran, have also admitted the credibility of some miracles. The above cited miracle which is tried to prove incredible by Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah, Bashiruddin Mahmood, Parvez and Iqbal Khanam and interpreted in such a way, though their interpretations differed from each other, that there was no miraculous in it. But we see Maulana Muhammad Ali who not only admits its actual happening but also cites very powerful arguments for the same :

”جس نتیجے پر ہم پہنچتے ہیں وہ اس حد تک یقینی ہے کہ رسول اللہ کے زمانہ میں انشقاق قمر دیکھا گیا۔ یعنی چاند کا پھٹنا دیکھا گیا۔ . . . جہاں تک اصل واقعہ کا تعلق ہے ایک طرف احادیث اس بارے میں تواتر کو پہنچ گئی ہیں اور دوسری طرف قرآن کریم کے صریح الفاظ بھی اسی پر دال ہیں کہ انشقاق قمر وقوع میں آیا“⁷³۔

He, further arguing to ensure its credibility, rejects the opinions of those who connect this verse to the events of the general resurrection :

”معجزات کی تمام تاریخ میں کوئی معجزہ ایسی زبردست شہادت سے ثابت نہیں جیسے شق القمر کا معجزہ اور یہ جو بعض لوگوں نے کہا ہے کہ انشقاق قمر قریب قیامت میں وقوع میں آئے گا اور اس بنا پر انہوں نے اسے پیشین گوئی قرار دیا ہے تو قیامت کے متعلق تو یہ بھی نہیں کہا جا سکتا کہ چاند باقی بھی رہے گا یا نہیں“⁷⁴۔

In his English translation he regards it unique among the miracles of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H :

“In the whole history of the miracles, this is the only miracle of which a contemporaneous record exists. It thus stands unique even among the miracles of the Holy Prophet”⁷⁵.

Answering to the objections raised by the critics of miracles, he argues as such :

”رہا یہ کہ انشقاق قمر خلاف قانون قدرت ہے تو یہ اعتراض اس قدر زبردست شہادت کے ہوتے ہوئے قابل توجہ نہیں۔ کسی قانون قدرت نے کوئی فیصلہ قطعی نہیں دے دیا کہ ان اجرام سماوی میں کوئی تغیرات یا بڑے بڑے انقلاب نمودار نہیں ہوتے رہتے۔ . . . یہ کون سی بعید بات ہے کہ کوئی عظیم الشان انقلاب چاند کے اندر نمودار ہوا۔ جس نے انشقاق کی کیفیت اس کے اندر پیدا کر دی اور اللہ تعالیٰ نے آنحضرت کی قوت اعجازی کے اظہار کے لیے یہ تغیر عظیم ان لوگوں کو بھی دکھا دیا جو آپ سے نشان مانگتے تھے“⁷⁶۔

Explaining 17 : 59 he admits that it is a mistake committed generally that this verse shows the denial of miracles in general or of some particular miracles⁷⁷. But he does not explain that why he, himself, has denied so many miracles already mentioned in the Holy Quran.

If we go through and thrash the commentaries of these critics of miracles we are astonished that they themselves have admitted the credibility of miracles but under the influence of Western thought, following each other, or perhaps to prove them most modern and uptodate commentators they denied the miracles. Here are cited some examples from the commentary of Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah. He admits the miraculous birth of Jesus :

”چوں کہ بی بی مریم صاحبہ سے اس حالت غیر معمولہ میں فرزند کا بلا باپ کے پیدا ہونا نہایت ہی بڑھ کر خوارق عادت تھا اور ہر گز معمولی طور پر نہ تھا“⁷⁸۔

He has indicated other instances of the miracles of Jesus :

”سو آواز دی اس کو (اسی نوزائیدہ بچہ عیسیٰ سلام علیہ نے) اس کے نیچے سے یہ کہ میرے سبب سے تو آزرده خاطر نہ ہو کیوں کہ تحقیق پیدا کیا ہے تیرے پروردگار نے لیچے تیرے سردار دین کا وہ بولے کہ ہم کیوں کر بات کریں اس سے جو ہے تیری گود میں بالکل تازہ جنا ہوا بچہ (اس پر وہ بچہ یعنی عیسیٰ سلام علیہ خود ہی) بول اٹھا“⁷⁹۔

He, further, criticizes those modern commentators who reject the miraculous birth of Jesus :

”جو لوگ یہ وہم و خیال کرتے ہیں یوسف نجار کے ساتھ مریم کا نکاح ہوا بعدہ یوسف نجار ہی سے مریم کو حمل ہوا اور اسی سبب سے وہ عیسیٰ سلام علیہ کو یوسف نجار ہی کا بیٹا تصور کرتے ہیں۔ اس وہم و خیال میں ان کی سراسر غلطی اور سخت خطا ہے“⁸⁰۔

He further admits the ascension of Jesus, though he changes the nature of the same :

”بعبارت النص قرآن مجید ظاہر باہر ہے کہ عیسیٰ سلام علیہ تک ابھی تک زندہ و سلامت اسی روئے زمین پر ہی موجود ہیں اور قرب قیامت ہی میں ظاہر ہو کر یہود اور نصاریٰ کی افراط و تفریط کو رفع کریں گے عیسیٰ سلام علیہ ابھی تک صرف بامداد و تائید قدرت ربانی زندہ و سلامت اور ہر طرح موذیوں، ظالموں، یہودیوں کی شرارت و شقاوت سے امن و امان میں رہے ہیں“⁸¹۔

He, further, answering a question generally cited, says that Jesus will not appear again as a prophet only but will combine both qualities, remaining as a prophet, as well as a follower of the Holy Prophet⁸² P.B.U.H. He also admits that the birth of a son, in the old age of Zakariyya and his wife, was also a miracle :

”قادر قیوم فعال لما یرید نے زکریا سلام علیہ کو ان کی خاص اسی حالت مذکور ہی میں بطور معجزہ و خوارق عادت غیر معمولہ و غیر معهودہ صورت ہی میں فرزند یحییٰ سلام علیہ مرزوق و موهوب فرمایا“⁸³۔

Though deviating in detail, he admits the miraculous bringing of the throne of the queen of Sheba :

”سلیمان نے خود ہی فرمایا جن کے پاس کامل علم کتاب اللہ کا تھا (اے عفریت) میں خود ہی لاؤں گا اس کو بطور تیرے سامنے بطور معجزہ۔ آگے اس کے کہ تو اپنی آنکھ جھپکے (چنانچہ وہ تخت صرف ارادے ربانی ہی سے آگیا“⁸⁴۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim, being a critic of miracles, himself, on the very title-page of his translation, mentions that “The great miracles and prophecies of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) have been pointed throughout”⁸⁵. Further he has translated 7 : 107-108 according to the traditional and orthodox way and admitting the credibility of this miracle blames O.T. which does not mention it explicitly :

“This miracle of Moses is not expressly mentioned anywhere in the Old Testament but seems to be hinted at in Exod. 4-8”⁸⁶.

Discussing the Battle of Hunain under 9 : 25-26, he seems to admit the credibility of miracle :

“The prophet throwing a handful of dust against the enemies and the divine help coming in time, they gained the victory”⁸⁷.

Commenting on the story of Joseph under 12 : 15 he says :

“This is a clear proof of his having knowledge of the tricks and the reality of the case On the other side, Joseph sent on intimation to his father with his shirt which restored his sight”⁸⁸.

Mentioning the beliefs of Jews (maintaining Jesus a false prophet and accursed of God) and christians (believing in Trinity and Jesus’ death on the cross) he admits the ascension of Jesus :

“Hence the Holy Quran refutes all the three beliefs and declares that he was taken up by God unto Himself”⁸⁹.

Discussing 41 : 50 he accepts that the miracles shown by the Prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H. as mentioned in the Quran and authentic traditions of the prophet P.B.U.H., are innumerable.” “But it is altogether a white lie that he showed no miracles at all, and that he always refused to show a miracle or confessed his sheer inability to do so”⁹⁰.

Some punitive and retributive miracles of the Holy Quran are generally accepted by modern commentators. Khawja Ahmad Din, explaining 7 : 72, indicates the punishment inflicting Aad :

”وہ پٹھانوں کی طرح بڑے شہ زور تھے۔ کمزور ہوا نے سخت آندھی کی صورت اختیار کر کے انہیں ہلاک کر ڈالا“⁹¹۔

Misfortune of the people of Lot is cited as such :

”اور ہم نے (ان کی بستی کو آٹ دیا اور) ان پر (پتھروں کا) سخت سینہ برسایا سو تو (اے رسول) دیکھ کہ مجرموں کا کیسا انجام ہوا“⁹²۔

The torment involving Samood is admitted :

”پھر وعدہ کے مطابق تین دن کے بعد ان کو زلزلہ نے پکڑ لیا پس وہ اپنے گھروں میں سینوں کے بل پڑے رہ گئے“⁹³۔

Exemplary end of the people of Noah is told :

”پھر ہم نے نوح کو اور اس کے ساتھ والوں کو کشتی میں نجات دی اور ہم نے ان لوگوں کو جنہوں نے ہماری آیات کو جھٹلایا۔ غرق کر دیا“⁹⁴۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim, explaining, 7 : 73 concludes :

“Three days after the killing of the camel they were destroyed by some terrible occurrence”⁹⁵.

He admits the horrible end of the people of Shuaib :

“Wherefore, the earthquake seiged them and they were found in the morning in their houses dead and prostrat”⁹⁶.

Dr. Abdul Hakim, not only admits that the earth was made to sink with Korah by the Order of God⁹⁷ but also supports this miracle referring to the Bible⁹⁸.

Commenting on 33 : 9, he explains the miracle of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. as follows :

“God sent a cold piercing east wind which benumbed the limbs of the enemies, blew dust against their faces, extinguished their fires, upset their tents, and frightened off their horses. Then the Quresh broke up their seige and fled back to their houses”⁹⁹.

Maulvi Muhammad Ali admits the fact that God may provide a thing by the result of a cause or without any cause :

”ہم اس بات پر ایمان لاتے ہیں کہ اللہ تعالیٰ بلا اسباب بھی کوئی امر مہیا کر دے یا ایسے اسباب سے مہیا کر دے جن کے سمجھنے پر انسان قادر نہیں جیسے ویرزقہ من حیث لا یحتسب“⁹⁹ - A

Some modern commentators try to harmonize the credibility of miracle with the accustomed laws of nature. Bashiruddin Mahmood changes the natur of miracle of the sea having cloven asunder for Israelites by Moses' Rod as such :

”اس واقعہ میں معجزہ یہ تھا کہ اللہ تعالیٰ نے بنی اسرائیل کو ایسے وقت میں سمندر کے سامنے پہنچایا جب کہ جزر کا وقت تھا اور حضرت موسیٰ کے ہاتھ اٹھاتے ہی اللہ تعالیٰ کے حکم کے ماتحت پانی گھٹنا شروع ہو گیا لیکن فرعون کا لشکر جب سمندر میں داخل ہوا...“¹⁰⁰۔

Modern commentators are sometimes quite at a loss how to deny all miracles so they try the only expedient left to them to keep silence and to avoid any comments.

Sir Sayyid does not discuss the miracles of Jesus as mentioned in 3 : 49. The full energy is spent on rejecting the miraculous birth, ascension and talk of Jesus in the cradle. The translation of 3 : 49 is not changed¹⁰¹.

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood does not make any change in the translation of 3 : 37 and 3 : 41 but explains both according to the traditional way¹⁰².

He further does not take the risk of changing the translation of 17 : 1¹⁰³.

The translation of 21 : 69 is also not changed¹⁰⁴. Dr. Abdul Hakim avoids commenting on 2 : 57¹⁰⁵, 3 : 37¹⁰⁶, 7 : 64¹⁰⁷, 11 : 58¹⁰⁸, 41 : 17¹⁰⁹, 7 : 84¹¹⁰, 15 : 73-74¹¹¹, and so many other verses regarding miracles and translates them in accordance with orthodox way. Maulvi Sher Ali, likewise, mostly does not change the translation and avoids commenting on so many verses as 3 : 13¹¹², 3 : 37¹¹³, 3 : 39-41¹¹⁴, 3 : 123-125¹¹⁵, 7 : 64¹¹⁶, 7 : 72¹¹⁷, 7 : 43¹¹⁸, 8 : 9¹¹⁹ etc.

Although the modern commentators have admitted the actual happening of the miracles sometimes, as has been cited before in the examples from their exegesis and sometimes they accept it partially and sometimes they translate it according to the orthodox way and avoid commenting. Still their attempts to criticise the miracles, where they find some expediency are seen obviously.

Khawja Ahmad Din, interpreting 3 : 37 says :

”زکریا اس کی خوبصورتی کے سبب اس کی خوب حفاظت کرتے تھے۔ لیکن جب وہ ضرورتاً باہر جاتے تھے تو بعض مجاور برے خیال سے زکریا سے چوری حضرت مریم کو عمدہ عمدہ کھانے دے جاتے تھے لیکن جب (بھی) زکریا اپنے محراب (یعنی سردار امام کے مناسب حجرے اور صدر جگہ) میں اس مریم کے پاس آتے تو اس کے پاس کچھ رزق پاتے تو پوچھتے کہ اے مریم یہ تجھے کہاں سے ملا ہے۔ وہ (بھولی بھالی لڑکی) جواب دیتی کہ یہ اللہ کی طرف سے (یعنی اس کی مہربانی سے) پہنچتا ہے“¹²⁰۔

We have seen that while attempting only to deny the miraculous element, the interpretation is distorted and presented in such a way which is rather insulting and blasphemous. Further, discussing the ascension of Jesus he concludes :

”حضرت مسیح بیہوشی کے عالم میں تھے۔ وہ خود اپنے پاؤں پر چل کر کہیں آ جا نہیں سکتے تھے۔ خدا انہیں لوگوں کے ذریعے اٹھوا کر کس ایسے علاقے میں لے گیا جہاں انہیں صحت عطا کی گئی اور ظالموں کے جبر سے خلاصی ملی۔ یہی ان کا خدا کی طرف اٹھا کر لے جایا جانا تھا“¹²¹۔

Admitting the fact that a miraculous punishment inflicted Samood, he justifies it on very interesting ground as follows :

”سو اس تکبر کے سبب سے انہوں نے اس اولٹنی کی کونچیں کاٹ ڈالیں (اگر وہ اونٹنی والے کی اجازت سے اسے جلدی کے ساتھ ذبح کر لیتے تو یہ ممکن تھا لیکن انہوں نے بلا وجہ جانور کو تڑپایا اور یہ بات خدا کے نزدیک کسی صورت سے بھی پسندیدہ نہیں ہے)“¹²²۔

Commenting on whitening of Moses' hand he cites a very amusing explanation :

”یدبیضا صرف دو دفعہ ہوا تھا۔ رات کے وقت پہاڑ پر اور فرعون کے دربار کے بند مکانوں میں لیکن ضحیٰ کے وقت جادوگروں کے مقابلہ میں ہر گز نہیں دکھلایا گیا۔ اس کے ایسے پہلے ہاتھ کو گریبان میں داخل کرنا ہوتا اور پھر بازو کے ساتھ اسے ضم کرنا پڑتا تھا۔ بعد ازاں اسے کھینچ کر نکالنے کی ضرورت تھی۔ تب کہیں وہ بجلی رگڑ کے ذریعے سے ہاتھ میں آتی تھی“¹²³

It seems that the commentator considers the prophet Moses as a juggler showing feats to the onlookers and not performing miracles with the power of God and with His permission. The other explanation about the rod of Moses is as similar :

”پس اس نے اپنا عصا پھینکا سو جب تو وہ (عصا اس طرح حرکت کرتا تھا گویا کہ وہ سونٹا) ایک ظاہر سا ناپ تھا۔ (اس عصا میں اس بجلی کے سبب جو موسیٰ کے جسم میں محفوظ رکھی گئی تھی تین دفعہ تھوڑی دیر کے لئے حرکت پیدا ہوئی لیکن وہ عصا اپنی ذات کو چھوڑ کر سانپ کی ذات میں ہرگز ہرگز منقلب نہیں ہوا تھا“¹²⁴۔

Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah translates 2 : 260 metaphorically as such :

”اے پروردگار میرے تعلیم فرما مجھ کو کس طرح سے زندہ (ہدایت یافتہ) کرے گا تو مردے ایمانی (میری تبلیغ سے)۔۔۔۔ اگر آپ بھی ایمانی مردوں کو اپنے پاس رکھ کر ان کو اپنی طرف مائل و راغب کر لو گے اور ان کے ساتھ موانست و مدارات و تالیف قلوب و الفت و محبت کر کے ان کو اپنا سونس بنا لو گے۔۔۔ تو وہ مردگان ایمانی و منکران کتاب اللہ یہی بالکل ان پلے ہوئے شکاری پرندوں کی طرح فوراً تمہاری آواز پر دوڑے آئیں گے“¹²⁵۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim, commenting on 27 : 9-13 gives also a similar explanation :

“This burning fire if seen by the physical eyes must be due to phosphorus light emating from phosphorescent substance like fireflies, cantharices, bones, certain minerals, and plants, for the divine light cannot be seen by these eyes“¹²⁶.

Discussing the story of the people of the cave under 18 : 8 he cites a psychological interpretation :

“That is the place is so horrible that motionless things appear to be moving under the delusion of horror“¹²⁷.

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood overshoots the mark when he explains 7 : 118 as such :

”اصل بات یہ ہے کہ انہوں نے اپنی رسیوں میں لوہے کے پیچ چھپائے ہوئے تھے اور سونٹوں میں پارہ بھرا ہوا تھا جس کی وجہ سے وہ حرکت کرتے تھے جیسے آج کل کے یورپ کے کھلونے ہوتے ہیں۔ موسیٰ نے جب ان پر اپنا عصا مارا تو پیچ ٹوٹ گئے اور پارہ نکل گیا اور سب فریب ظاہر ہو گیا۔ اسے محاورہ کی زبان میں نکلنا کہا گیا ہے“¹²⁸۔

How boldly the commentator has denied the obvious miracle by adding so many imaginary things in the explanation. Otherwise the mention of the pieces of iron and mercury to be filled in the rods of the enchanters has nothing to do with the real explanation. The direct influence of the various dazzling inventions of the Europe is seen explicitly. It is also obvious that the modern commentators, are very fond of showing themselves to be well-informed with upto date knowledge. They also try to cite novelty, oddness and singularity in their explanations to prove that they have discovered such new meanings not touched before. Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah gives new meaning to ”ذبح ابناء“ in 2 : 49 :

”ذبح اور قتل سے اس جگہ صرف ذلت اور حقارت ہی مراد ہو سکتی ہے اور اپنا سے مراد ہیں ذی عزت اور ذی قوت لوگ“¹²⁹۔

Further the word ”نساء“ is explained :

”نساء سے مراد ہیں فقیر حقیر غریب اور عوام الناس“¹³⁰۔

Dr. Abdul Hakim explains ”منطق الطیر“ as such :

”Thus the speech of the birds may mean cavalry drill. It may also have the literal acceptations here but the relations of the occasion point more strongly to the cavalry drill“¹³¹۔

Further explaining 27 : 40, he even changes the translation of the Holy Text : ”I will bring it to thee before thy tribute is delivered unto thee“¹³²۔

Maulvi Muhammad Ali, discovers a nice point in the etymology of the word ”بعرشہا“ in 27 : 40 :

”Solomon makes preparation to receive her. ‘Arshe-ha signifies a throne for her, being the throne that was prepared for her by Solomon, not her own throne in Sheba“¹³³۔

He, further, tries to justify his above explanation :

”The word ”tarf“ means an eye as well as a man generous or noble in respect of ancestry the idea conveyed being that he could do it without delay. Taking the other significance, the words may be translated as meaning before your noble (messenger) returns to you“¹³⁴۔

An interesting explanation of 2 : 73 is cited by Dr. Abdul Hakim, which has nothing to do with the text of the Holy Quran. Firstly he changes the translation and tells " . . . to strike it with some of its morals . . ." then he explains it as a philosopher as such :

"That is by self sacrifices a man gets enlightened and if he continues perseverently in self reforms and rectifications, his glorious virtues and powers that remain otherwise latent, begin to develop and come to light"¹³⁵.

He further explains and gives the details of such morals :

"That is correct selfishness with self-denial, enmity with love, pride with humility, enmity with sympathy, mischievousness with benevolence, covetousness with generosity, vanity with sincerity, lying with truthfulness, worldliness with godliness, vice with virtue and so on. Correct all evils with their opposite virtues ; and if you do this you shall be enlightened"¹³⁶.

Yaqub Ali Turab Ahmadi, translating 2 : 73 repeats the same idea without referring to Dr. Abdul Hakim :

"پس ہم نے تو یہ حکم دیا ہے کہ ہمض کو بعض کے ساتھ مارو (کیا معنی کہ اگر حرص غالب ہو تو قناعت اختیار کرو۔ غضب بھڑکے تو حلم اور نرمی سے مقابلہ کرو۔ یعنی محاذی قوتوں اور قوی کو باہم مارو کیوں کہ سنت اللہ یہی ہے کہ ایسے مقابلہ سے وہ مخفی اور نہان در نہان بلکہ مردہ یا پڑ مردہ قوتوں کو نشو و نما دیتا ہے)"¹³⁷۔

"اسی طریق پر اللہ تعالیٰ مردوں کو زندہ کیا کرتا ہے اور اپنے نشانات تم کو دکھایا کرتا ہے تاکہ تم عمل و دانش سیکھو"¹³⁸۔

He further elaborates the method :

"یعنی جب انسان اپنی شہوانی اور نفسانی قوتوں پر غلبہ پا کر ان کو اپنے پاؤں میں کچل دیتا اور دبا دیتا ہے تو اس کو ایک نور ملتا ہے . . . مثلاً یہ بات صاف ہے کہ جب انسان شہوت کو بے جا محل پر استعمال کرنے سے رکے گا تو اس کو عفت کی روشنی ملے گی۔ غضب کی قوت کو دبائے گا تو حلم ملے گا۔ طمع کو دبائے گا قناعت سے بہرہ ور ہوگا۔ اضطراب ترک کر دے گا استقلال عطا ہوگا بزدلی نامردی کے مارنے سے شجاعت ملے گی اور بلند پروای کی روح پیدا ہوگی"¹³⁹۔

Now the author, after citing such a philosophical exegesis, perhaps, feels that he has overshoot the mark and gone away from the real text. So he explains the verse in another way based on medical ground :

"ہاں یہ ہو سکتا ہے کہ وہ مردہ کوئی بیہوشی اور غشی کی حالت میں ہو اور گائے کا گرم گوشت اس پر باندھا گیا ہو تو اسے ہوش آ گیا ہو۔ یہ بات چون کہ اپنے اندر علمی پہلو رکھتی ہے اس لیے اس کے ماننے میں کوئی عذر نہیں ہو سکتا"¹⁴⁰۔

Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah, commenting on 2 : 57, and trying to deny the miraculous elements argues :

”بنو اسرائیل بڑے بھاری مجرم تھے اور اللہ تعالیٰ کی سخت مخالفت کے مرتکب تھے تو ایسی حالت میں ان پر بادلوں کا سایہ کرنا جو ایسی مہربانی ہے جو خدا کے کسی رسول کو بھی نصیب نہیں ہوئی سنت اللہ کے بالکل برخلاف ہے“¹⁴¹۔

But how to harmonize the explanation with the text he suggests an interpretation as follows :

”ان پر ہر وقت نہیں بلکہ گاہے گاہے بوقت ضرورت و حاجت بارش والے بادل آتے تھے“¹⁴²۔

Maulvi Sher Ali, very boldly, refutes the credibility of miracles and quite frankly preaches naturalism, and renders miracles contrary to wisdom :

“Since wisdom is one of the attributes of God, nothing may be attributed to Him which is contrary to wisdom The Quran does not admit the possibility of any such occurrences and does not attribute any such miracle to any of the prophets, nor does it claim any such miracle on behalf of the Holy Prophet himself”¹⁴³.

How our modern exegesis has been influenced by western thought and naturalism—can be estimated from the self-contradiction of a great scholar like Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Mr. Bashir Ahmad Dar, showing the development in the religious thought of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan depicts the true picture :

“There are certain points on which Sayyid Ahmad takes one position in his Bible commentary. In one respect his position varies even in two volumes of the Bible commentary itself. First, he unequivocally accepts the virgin birth of Christ. Defending the Gospel of Matthew against a German critic, Baur and others, he asserts that there is no doubt that Christ was born on virgin Mary (Bible commentary, vol. I. p. 85). Similarly, discussing this belief later on (1 : 18-15), he supports this virgin birth of Christ by reference to the Quranic verse (iii. 47) where Marry is reported to say, “O Lord ! How shall I have a son when no man hath touched me ?” He even goes so far as to say that the words “before they came together” (St. Matthew 1: 19) do not imply at all that Joseph and Marry cohabited even afterwards. Bible commentary, vol. II, pp. 37, 43)”¹⁴⁴.

So orthodox in believing the credibility of the miracles is so much influenced by dazzling light of western sciences that he changes himself totally. In the words of Bashir Ahmad Dar :

“But in the Quran Tafsir he totally rejects this belief. He holds that the disciples of Christ knew and accepted the fact that he proceeded from the seed of Joseph. (Quran commentary, vol. II, p. 30). Later on, discussing another verse of the Quran (XXI, 90), he asserts that the words “kept her chastity” do not mean that she had no sexual relation with any man, but that she had such relation only with her husband (ibid., p. 38)”¹⁴⁵.

Another example of the similar self-contradiction of Sir Sayyid is the issue of the death of Jesus. “In the Bible commentary he does not commit himself to any particular interpretation of the event. In order to avoid being misunderstood, he employs in Urdu the very Arabic word “rafa” (raise) used by the Quran (iv-158) in this connection. He uses the phrase “after Christ was raised (unto God)” (Bible commentary, vol. III, p. 3) and on the next page he says that “the Jews thought that they had crucified him, but he rose from the dead and went to the Heaven” (ibid., p. 4)”¹⁴⁶. But after his attitude had a turn to naturalism he adopted quite different explanation as in the words of Dar :

“But in the Quran-Tafsir, he rejects the possibility of Christs’ resurrection and ascension. He says that “when we view the whole matter in a historical context, it becomes clear that Christ did not die on the cross, something happened by which people thought that he had died. Later on his disciples took him down from the cross while he was still alive. But fearing the Jews, they concealed the fact and declared that Christ has ascended to heaven. (Quran commentary, vol. II, p. 43)”¹⁴⁷

It is but natural that when a man tries to prove him more well informed, more well-equipped and uptodate, he criticizes others to make room for him and to justify that his approach to the concerned issue is the best and most appropriate. Consequently we explicitly see the trends and attitude of the modern commentators harsh towards the orthodox ones. Sir Sayyid accuses all the orthodox commentators of the Holy Quran that they had made baseless stories in connection with the event of the “people of the Elephant”, keeping in view the words “Tair” (Birds) and Hijara’ (stone)¹⁴⁸.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah’s prejudice against the narraters of the miracle stories of the Holy Quran is seen at a climax when under 3 : 37 he says :

”پہلے تو اس مضمون کے گھڑنے والے ظالموں، موذیوں، باطل پیشواؤں نے وحی نبوی کی کئی ایک قسمیں مثلاً وحی جلی، وحی خفی، متلو اور غیر متلو وغیرہ بنا کر اپنی دکانداری کی بنیاد ڈالی اور بعد اس کے جب دیکھا کہ ان کا یہ پاکھنڈ بیوقوف اور جاہل لوگوں کے درمیان خوب ہی چل نکلا ہے تو پھر اپنے خانہ ساز - منگھڑت اولیاء اللہ کے الہامات باطلہ و مکاشفات مفروضہ کا اشتہار در اشتہار دے کر اپنی گرم بازاری کا ذریعہ وسیلہ بنا لیا“¹⁴⁹.

Refuting the miracles performed by Jesus, he rebukes the people differing from his opinion :

”جو لوگ فی الواقع جسمانی اندھوں کو بینا کرنے اور جسمانی پھلپھری والوں کو چنگا کرنے اور جسمانی مردوں کو زندہ کرنے کا بہتان و انترا عیسیٰ سلام علیہ پر خصوصاً اللہ تبارک و تعالیٰ پر لگاتے ہیں وہ سخت غلطی کرتے ہیں یہ وہم و خیال کرنا سراسر ان کی حماقت و سفاقت کا ثمرہ و نتیجہ ہے“¹⁵⁰۔

Maulve Sher Ali makes all the narraters of the miracles stories to be guilty :

“It is not to be thought of any reasonable person that he would first make a law or prescribe a rule and then himself proceed to contravene it He who attributes things like this to the righteous prophets of God in no way adds to the respect and honour in which they should be held, but is guilty of an attack upon their intelligence and integrity”¹⁵¹.

Another trend prevailing in the modern commentators is to possibly refute the traditional use of Jewish legends to explain the verses of Holy Quran¹⁵². The modern Koran expositers, further, degrade and render incredible all the traditional literature. Mr. Baljon rightly points out :

“In the opinion of quite a lot of modernists of the Indo-Pak subcontinent elucidations and historic details stemming from tradition, are to be regarded purely as human fancies”¹⁵³.

Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan rejects all the traditions pertaining to the famous event of the ascension of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H :

”بابن همه تمام روایتیں نہایت نامعتبر ہیں اور قصہ اور کہانی ہونے سے زیادہ کچھ رتبہ نہیں رکھتیں“¹⁵⁴۔

Khawaja Ahmad Din, putting stress on the fact that the ascension of the Holy Prophet P B.U.H. was only a nocturnal walk outside Makkah criticizes the traditional elucidations by the classic commentators :

”حدیثیں اس آیت کو معراج کے متعلق بیان کرتی ہیں - حدیثی تفسیر بلا شبہ ایسی ہی ہوا کرتی ہے - سیدھی باتوں کو دیو پری کا قصہ بنانا حدیثوں کا ہی کام ہے“¹⁵⁵۔

In the opinion of Dr. Baljon, “the best documented combating of tafsir-traditions has been supplied by Parvez. In the two volume work ‘Maqam Hadith’ (1953) which treats this matter at great length”¹⁵⁶.

It is very interesting to note that the modernists reproaching the classic expositers of the Holy Quran for the reason that they have used Jewish legends to explain the Quranic verses, themselves, mostly quote Bible here and there. Sir

Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Dr. Abdul Hakim, Khawja Ahmad Din, Maulvi Muhammad Ali, Maulvi Sher Ali, Bashiruddin Mahmood, Yaqub Ali Turab, and so many others have supported their various explanations frequently quoting from the Bible, so much so that sometimes they seem to render Bible as an umpire. The nine signs given to Moses are, in the opinion of Sir Sayyid, commandments :

”غرضیکہ ہماری تحقیق میں دونوں آیتوں میں ”تسع آیات“ سے وہ احکام مراد ہیں جو حضرت موسیٰ فرعون اور اس کی قوم کے پاس لے گئے تھے“¹⁵⁷۔

A very dangerous trend which we have seen through the innumerable examples cited by the modernists is the wrong use of metaphor. Their figurative and metaphorical elucidations of the miracles have almost changed the meanings totally and mostly their explanation resembles or seems to be copied from the explanations of the Batinies. Here are cited some of the examples of their interpretations. Explaining ”فالقی موسیٰ عصاه“ (”in 26 : 43-45), remarks al-Dai al-Ismaeli al-Numan bin Hayyon (d. 363 A.H.) as follows :

”و ذالک ما اید به من البیان . فاذا بذالک البیان يبطل افکھم“¹⁵⁸۔

Consequently the meanings of ”و ان الق عصاك“ are told :

”ان یلقیه علی ما خص به بعد ذالک من العلوم“¹⁵⁹۔

Interpretation of ”و یکلم الناس فی المهر“ is cited as :

”فی حال التریبة قبل البلوغ و کھلا ای یفعل ذالک ایضا بعد البلوغ و یوصف ذالک بجودة البیان و العلم و الحکمة“¹⁶⁰۔

Explaining ”و کیف تحی الموتی“ in 2 : 260, he says :

”ان یری کیف یحیی المستجیبین للدعوة من موت الجهل و الغفلة و الضلالة“¹⁶¹۔

Discussing 27 : 19, the meanings of ”فتبسم سلیمان ضاحکا من قولها“ are explained :

”ای اعجبه ما قال الرجل و استحسنه و وقف بذالک علی فطنته و یقظته“¹⁶²۔

Discussing miracles of Jesus he explains کھیئة الطیر as follows :

”یقول افید بالعلم المستجیب لی منکم من یصلح ان یرجع داعیا و الطائر مثل الداعی فاذا صار الی هیئة ذالک نفخت فیہ من روح الحیة و هو علم التایید الذی یلقى الی الدعاة“¹⁶³۔

Explaining ”و ابراء الاکمه والابرس“ he says :

”ای ابصر بالحکمة من کان قد عمی عنها و الا کمه هو الاعمی فالابرس هو الذی خالطه الشک و الضلال و غیره (واھی الموتی باذن الله) یقول اعید الکفار بدعوتی الیهم مومنین اذا استجابوا و الکفر فی الباطن الموت و المیت فی الباطن هو الکافر“¹⁶⁴۔

Elucidating 21 : 69 he remarks on ”ینار کونی بردا“ :

”یعنی انه ، سبحانه ، جعل کیدهم ، و ما اتوا به سلطانهم بردا فی قلبه و لم یسقر له قلبه و لم یغضب علیه“¹⁶⁵۔

But it is very interesting to note that batinies explain the verse both ways, literally and metaphorically and believe in both as the Editor, Arif Tanvir, has clarified in the introduction :

”كان هذا النظام الفكري يوجب على المستجيب ان يعترف بمبدائى الظاهر والباطن معاً لان العبدائين يشكلان روح الدين - و هما متصلان ببعضهما البعض و مرتبطان تمام الارتباط و واجبان على كل مستجيب و مومن فالظاهر هو المفهوم العام للتوصيات المتعلقة بتواعد عالم الدين و الباطن هو روح الدين المستور عن الانظار و لهذا فقد كان الدعاة الاسماعيليون يبشرون بمبادئهم بطريقتين و يدعون لنظامهم الفكري بفكرتين“¹⁶⁶ -

The author mentions the punishment of A'd :

”فآتاهم عذاب الله ظاهراً و باطناً قد مرهم“¹⁶⁷ -

Mentioning the misfortune of the people of Lot, he explains حجارة عليهم و امطرنا عليهم حجارة as such :

”يعنى رمينا بمسائل صعبة و اهلكهم الله بالعذاب الظاهر و الباطن“¹⁶⁸ -

By comparing the modern exegesis with that of Batinies and finding them similar, one can easily evaluate its significance. Moreover, the modernists have even left the apparent meaning while the Batinies believed in both. Further if we study the followers of Bab and Bahauallah, we see that they are the people who totally deny the credibility of the miracles. Muhammad Hussain al-Dhahabi, mentioning Abul Fazail al-Irani says :

”وقد ادعى بنبوته الباب و البهاء راح يفتش لهما عن معجزة تصدق دعواهما النبوة فلم يعثر ولا على جزء معجزة . فجره ذلك ان ينكر معجزات الرسل و يتاول ما ورد فى القرآن منها بانها من قبيل الاستعارات عن الامور المعقولة و الحقائق الممكنة مما يجوزه العقل السليم“¹⁶⁹ -

One, perhaps, cannot imagine the interpretation, where Bahauallah has overshooted the mark :

”و يرى بهاء الله ان ماورد فى القرآن من الصراط و الزكاة و الصيام و الحج و الكعبة و البلد الحرام و ما الى ذلك كله لا يراد به ظاهره و انما يراد به الائمة“¹⁷⁰ -

Abul Fazail, further, very frankly, declares his opinion about the miracle stories :

”و فى كتاب الدرر البهية صرح ابو الفضائل بان قصص القران غير واقعة و انما فى الحقيقة رموز الى معان خفية“¹⁷¹ -

It is obvious that this stage is the drop scene of the exegesis of the Holy Quran :

فاعتبروا يا اولى الابصار

CONCLUSION

The line of thinking pointed out in the introduction and the treatment of the efforts made in the exegesis of the Quran at different stages regarding miracle as has been elaborately presented in the body of the thesis, leads us to the conclusion that the source of error in explaining away miracles in the modern trends of exegesis of the Holy Quran lies in the want of distinction between Religion and knowledge as two ultimate values.

In view of distinctions arrived at in the analysis of the effort of the trends in the exegesis we are justified to conclude that it is the duty of every earnest student of Religion as well as the student of science to vigilently guard that no confusion in the problem and the method of the two values, Religion and Science should ever be allowed to permeate. Unfortunately the vigilance is ignored as a result of this negligence, confusion has arisen on the basis of misconception that one value in itself (Religion) can be subordinated to the point of view of another value (knowledge).

Because this lack of vigilance has led us to be involved in so many errors we could not check the modern trends in the exegesis of the Holy Quran regarding miracle. In fact the sources of their mistakes in their point of view are :

1. That they are very much dazzled by the light of western sciences specially the naturalism.
2. That they try to change the nature of miracle though admitting it to some extent.
3. That they keep silent and avoid commenting on so many verses of the Holy Quran and only translate them according to the traditional way.
4. That if they change the translation with the support of brackets they have to insert quite irrelevant material to harmonize it with their own views.
5. That they select the uncommon import of expressions when they seek the support of etymology.
6. That they, themselves, differ from each other, if Maulvi Muhammed Ali believes in the sundering of the moon others refute it. If of Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah Chakralvi believes in the miraculous birth of Jesus, the ascension of Jesus and bringing the throne of the Queen of Sheba, the others deny them totally. Some change their own mind and self-contradiction takes room in their exegesis.

7. That their interpretations, though mostly common and copied from each other, still sometime differ badly.
8. That they have generally made the Bible umpire of miracles itself they refer to it wrongly and those who explain away miracles in the Bible are brought to sit in judgement on the Holy Quran and take refuge in the high criticism of the Bible in order to deny the miraculous element in the Holy Quran. The source of this blunder is want of criterion of truth in their approach to Religion and they fail to understand that those who are incapable of realizing the truth of religion are invited to judge the truth of religious verities in preference over the subject of revelation itself.
9. That they have taken refuge in interpreting the revealed truth as figurative and metaphorical to deviate from the faithful meaning through detaching all the statements of miracles from their context.
10. That they have criticized the classic expositors so much so that they tried to degrade them.
11. That they have created a repugnance for the traditions of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H.
12. That they are causing an extreme type of confusion for the generations to come.
13. That their interpretations sometime resemble those of Batinies and the followers of Bab.
14. That they ignore the effect of mention of miracles on human mind in generating faith and conviction : They are inclined rather to do away with the belief in the miracles.
15. That they never presented a healthy and refined Quranic concept of miracles.

The question arises that when they believe the punitive miracles to some extent by changing its nature and believe the Holy Quran to be an existing miracle of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H., then why to minimise, negate or refute the other miracles of the Holy Quran and cause repugnance for the classic commentators except that they are covering a way to the denial of all the miraculous and ultimately to deny even the Holy Quran as miracle. In short, they caused the distortion of the exegesis of the Holy Quran under the impact of the western thought.

One may object that the classic and orthodox exegesis, itself, is not free from the difference of opinion as each commentary has its own color. Muhammad Hussain al-Dhahabi, in this connection, has rightly pointed out :

”و نهن لا ننكر ان هناك اختلاف بين السلف فى التفسير . كما لا ننكر ان هناك اختلافاً بين قولين او اقوال الشخص واحد منهم . و لكن هذا الاختلاف قلنا ان معظمة يرجع الى اختلاف عبارة و تنوع لا اختلاف تناقض و تضاد فما كان من هذا القبيل فالجمع بينه سهل ميسور“¹⁷².

Thus, it is an explicitly admitted fact that the true interpretation of the miracles is in orthodox exegesis which has been carried out in the light of Kitab and Sunnah because of its following characteristics :

1. That the first and foremost characteristic of the classic exegesis is that the explanation of the Quranic verses is made with the authority of authentic Sunnah.
2. That this category of exegesis has the approval of the muslim scholars all over the world for fourteen centuries.
3. That the basic principles of Quranic exegesis have been formulated and systematized.
4. That only well-equipped scholars, well versed in necessary sciences, have dared to do this work.
5. That the common and general meaning of the text is taken which was understood and used in the days when the revelation of the Holy Quran occurred.
6. That the figurative and metaphorical meanings are taken only in strict accordance to the context of the text.
7. That the interpretation of miracles—throughout the fourteen centuries had been mostly uniform.
8. That if there is difference of opinion, this difference is of an ordinary nature and does not clash with the fundamental teachings of the Holy Quran.
9. That the use of Jewish legends, where applied, is made only to give further detail or in support of actual meanings of the verses and celebrated commentators are very careful to take them.
10. That one adopting the classic way can never adopt the ways as adopted by Batinies, Bahaulah or modernists.
11. That the performance of miracles is never mentioned in such a way as to deify the psophets.

However, in my humble opinion, the exegesis of miracle verses should indicate the power of God and unnecessary details should be avoided as al-Dhahabi remarks :

”فالجري بحال من لا يميل الى الفضول . ان يو من بانه (نوح) عليه السلام صنع الفلك - جسما
قص الله تعالى في كتابه ولا يخوض في مقدار طولها و عرضها و ارتفاعها و من اى خشب صنعها
و بكم مدة اتم عملها الى غير ذلك مما لم يشرحه الكتاب و لم تبينه السنة الصحيحة“¹⁷³ -

FOOT NOTES

1. He defined the ultimate end of knowledge as "man's mastery of the forces of nature, discovery and invention of technical devices, perception of causes and effects and improvement of the essence of man". (M. Rosenthal and P.Y. din, A Dictionary of Philosophy, Moscow, p. 117).
2. Baljon, Modern Muslim Koran Interpretation, Leiden, 1961, p. 5.
3. *ibid.*, p. 25, cf. al-Tantawi, al-Jawahir, vol. I, p. 161. Discussing 2 : 260, deriving a lesson from the cuttings of the four birds into pieces he says :

ولا جرم ان ذالك يدعو حثا لعلم التشريح ويتلوه الطب الا اذا درست العلوم الطبيعية من النبات و الحيوان و خصائلها و انواعها و اجناسها و اشكالها و بذورها و غير ذالك -

(Al-Jawahir, vol. I, p. 240).

4. al-Mashriqi, Tazkira, vol, I, p. 89.
5. *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 258.
6. *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 30.
7. *ibid.*, p. 31.
8. *ibid.*, p. 83.
9. al-Mashriqi, Hadith al-Quran, p. 9.
10. al-Mashriqi, Tazkira, vol. I, p. 84.
11. al-Mashriqi, Hadith al-Quran, p. 279. Cf. Muhammad Ali who discussing the same says :
"The Quran had repeatedly warned the unbelievers that Islam would be made triumphant in the land, and the righteous servants who were made to suffer persecution would one day be masters of the land. The words also contain a prophecy of the possession of the Holy Land by the Muslims, which was fulfilled in the Caliphate of Umar". (Holy Quran, Lahore, p. 658).
12. al-Mashriqi, Hadith al-Quran, p. 69.
13. *ibid.*, p. 190.
14. al-Mashriqi, Tazkira, vol. I, p. 88.
15. al-Mashriqi, Hadith al-Quran, p. 87.
16. *ibid.*, pp. 190-191.
17. Sir Sayyid, Tafsir al-Quran, Agra, 1903.
18. al-Dhahbi, Al-Tafsir wal Mufasssiroon, Cairo, 1961, vol. I, p. 155.
19. *ibid.*, p. 147.
20. *ibid.*
21. *ibid.*
22. *ibid.*
23. *ibid.*
24. *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 148.
25. *ibid.*
26. *ibid.*, p. 149.
27. *ibid.*
28. Sir Sayyid. Tafsir, vol. I, p 112.
29. Muhammad Abdullah, Tarjamatul Quran, Lahore, p. 42.
30. Abdul Hakim, The Holy Quran, Patiala, p. 27.
31. Muhammad Abdullah, Tarjamatul Quran, Lahore, p. 42.

32. Muhammad Ali, *The Holy Quran*, Lahore, p. 29, cf. also *Bayan al-Quran*, Lahore, vol. I, p. 70.
33. Parvez, *Mafhoom al-Quran Part I*, op. cit.
34. Muhammad Ali, *The Holy Quran*, Lahore, p. 353.
35. *ibid.*, pp. 631-632.
36. Muhammad Abdullah, *Tarjamatul Quran*, pt. IX, p. 9.
37. *ibid.*, pt. XVI, pp. 18-19.
38. Parvez, *Mafhoom al-Quran*, pt. IX, pp. 365-366.
39. Muhammad Abdullah, *Tarjamatul Quran*, pt. III, pp. 171-175.
40. Abdul Hakim, *Holy Quran*, Patiala, p. 228.
41. *ibid.*, p. 229.
42. The use of brackets is noticeable.
43. The attempt to harmonize the interpretation is remarkable.
44. Khawja Ahmad Din, *Bayan Lin Nas*, vol. I, p. 476.
45. Bashiruddin Mahmood, *Tafsir Saghir*, Rabwah, p. 120.
46. Parvez, *Mafhoom al-Quran*, vol. III, pp. 130-131.
47. *al-Munjid*, Beirut, 1956, p. 857.
48. Muhammad Abdullah, *Tarjamatul Quran*, pt. XXX, p. 25.
49. The commentator does not explain that in the time of David, how Quranic prayers were offered.
50. *ibid.*, pt. XVII, p. 9.
51. Abdul Hakim, *The Holy Quran*, Patiala, p. 507.
52. *ibid.*, p. 577.
53. Muhammad Ali, *Bayan al-Quran*, Lahore, vol. III, p. 1411, cf. Maulvi Sher Ali : "One woman of the tribe of the Naml said" (*The Holy Quran*, Rabwah, p. 369).
54. *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 1277.
55. *ibid.*
56. Bashiruddin Mahmood, *Tafsir Saghir*, p. 666.
57. *ibid.*, p. 779, cf., also Sher Ali telling al-Naml as Wadi al-Naml (or the name of a valley which is situated between Jibrun and Asqalan and that Namlah is the name of a tribe. (*The Holy Quran*, Rabwah, 1955, p. 638).
58. *Mafhoom al-Quran*, pt. XVII, p. 743.
59. *ibid.*, pt. XIX, p. 864.
60. Muhammad Abdullah, *Tarjamatul Quran*, pt. XVII, p. 8.
61. Muhammad Ali, *Holy Quran*, Lahore, p. 652.
62. Muhammad Ali, *Bayan al-Quran*, Lahore, vol. II, p. 1275.
63. Y. A. Turab, *Tarjamatul Quran*, Qadian, 1915, pt. XVI, p. 34.
64. Parvez, *Mafhoom al-Quran*, pt. XVII, p. 741.
65. Muhammad Abdullah, *Tarjamatul Quran*, pt. XXVII, p. 16.
66. Bashiruddin Mahmood, *Tafsir Saghir*, p. 16.
67. *ibid.*
68. Parvez, *Mafhoom al-Quran*, pt. XXVII, p. 1248.
69. Iqbal Khanam, *Asan Quran*, Jallunder (India), 1943, p. 1075.
70. *ibid.*, p. 1076.
71. *ibid.*, intro., p. ب.

72. *ibid.*, intro., p° ج°
73. Muhammad Ali, *Bayan al-Quran*, Lahore, vol. III, p. 1785.
74. *ibid.*
75. Muhammad Ali, *Holy Quran*, Lahore, p. 1022.
76. Muhammad Ali, *Bayan al-Quran*, Lahore, vol. III, p. 1786 cf. also Yaqub Ali Turab Ahmadi to admit this miracle though he cites a different interpretation as well. *Tarjamatul Quran*, pt. XXVII, Qadian, p. 32. Cf. also *The Review of Religions*, Qadian, 1908 : "It is idle to say that it is against the laws of nature for no one can claim to have discovered all the laws of nature.
77. *ibid.*, vol. II, pp. 1131-32.
78. Muhammad Abdullah, *Tarjamatul-Quran*, pt. III, p. 151.
79. *ibid.*, p. 149.
80. Muhammad Abdullah, *Tarjamatul-Quran*, pt. III, p. 168. Cf. Yaqub Ali Turab Ahmadi arguing the miraculous birth of Jesus and answering the objections put by Sir Sayyid and citing philosophical conclusions as such :

”جو لوگ محض قانون قدرت کے حوالے سے مسیح کی بن باپ پیدائش پر اعتراض کرتے ہیں۔ وہ اتنا نہیں جانتے کہ قانون قدرت کا کسی نے احاطہ نہیں کیا۔۔۔۔۔ الغرض قانون قدرت اس کا منافی نہیں کہ بن باپ کوئی بچہ پیدا ہو۔۔۔۔۔ حضرت مسیح کے بن باپ پیدا ہونے کا سر یہ تھا۔۔۔۔۔ کہ اب بنی اسرائیل کے خاندان میں نبوت گم ہو گئی ہے۔“

(*Tarjamatul Quran*, pt. XVI, Qadian, 1919, pp. 121-123).

81. *ibid.*, pt. III, p. 162.
82. *ibid.*, p. 166.
83. *ibid.*, 168.
84. *ibid.*, pt. XIX, p. 28.
85. Abdul Hakim, *The Holy Quran*, Patiala, 1905, title page.
86. *ibid.*, p. 273.
87. *ibid.*, p. 304.
88. *ibid.*, p. 365.
89. *ibid.*, p. 193.
90. *ibid.*, p. 696,
91. Khawja Ahmad Din, *Bayan lin-Nas*, Vol. II, p. 230.
92. *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 235.
93. *ibid.*
94. *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 32.
95. *Holy Quran*, Patiala, p. 351.
96. *ibid.*, p. 272.
97. *ibid.*, p. 596.
98. *Numbers*, Chap. 16 : 30-33 (*The Holy Bible*, London, p. 178).
99. Abdul Hakim, *Holy Quran*, p. 621.
- 99-A Muhammad Ali, *Holy Quran*, Lahore, under 3 : 36-37.
100. Bashiruddin Mahmood, *Tafsir Kabir*, under 2 : 51 Cf. Muhammad Ali to translate ان اضرب بعصاك البحر as "seek a way into the see with your community". (*Holy Quran*, Lahore, p. 731).

101. Sir Sayyid, Tafsir al-Quran, vol. III, p. 221.
102. Bashiruddin Mahmood, Tafsir Saghir.
103. ibid.
104. ibid.
105. Abdul Hakim, Holy Quran, Patiala, p. 118.
106. ibid., p. 132.
107. ibid., p. 268.
108. ibid., p. 351.
109. ibid., p. 691.
110. ibid., p. 271.
111. ibid., p. 407.
112. Sher Ali, The Holy Quran, Rabwah, 1955, p. 49.
113. ibid., p. 52.
114. ibid., p. 53.
115. ibid., p. 63.
116. ibid., p. 147.
117. ibid., p. 148.
118. ibid., p. 155.
119. ibid., 165.
120. Khawja Ahmad Din, Bayan Lin Nas, vol. I, p. 472.
121. ibid., p. 643.
122. ibid., vol. II, p. 233. Note the use of prolonged brackets.
123. ibid., vol. II, p. 253.
124. ibid., vol. II, p. 255.
125. Muhammad Abdullah, Tarjamatul Quran, pt. III, pp. 11-12.
126. Abdul Hakim, The Holy Quran, Patiala, p. 574.
127. ibid.
128. Bashiruddin Mahmood, Tafsir Saghir, p. 334.
129. Muhammad Abdullah, Tarjamatul Quran, pt. I, p. 38.
130. ibid.
131. Abdul Hakim, The Holy Quran, Patiala, p. 576.
132. ibid., p. 578.
133. Muhammad Ali, The Holy Quran, Lahore, p. 749.
134. ibid., p. 750.
135. Abdul Hakim, The Holy Quran, Patiala, p. 122.
136. ibid., p. 123.
137. The use of brackets is noticeable.
138. Y.A. Turab, Fafsir al-Quran, Qadian, 1318 A.H., p. 106.
139. ibid., p. 106.
140. ibid., p. 107.
141. Muhammad Abdullah, Tarjamatul Quran, Lahore, p. 42.
142. ibid. p. 57.
143. Sher Ali, The Holy Quran, Rabwah, pp. 133-134.
144. B.A. Dar, Religious Thought of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Lahore, 1957, p. 104.
145. ibid.
146. ibid , p. 105.

147. *ibid.*
148. Sir Sayyid, *al-Khutbat al-Ahmadiyya*, p. 552.
149. Muhammad Abdullah, *Tarjamatul Quran*, Lahore, pt. III, p. 146.
150. *ibid.*, pt. III, pp. 174-175.
151. Sher Ali, *The Holy Quran*, Rabwah, p. 134.
152. Cf. H.A.R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam*, 1947, p. 73 and Dr. Baljon, *Modern Muslim Koran Interpretation*, Leiden, 1961, p. 16.
153. Baljon, *Modern Muslim Koran Interpretation*, p. 17.
154. Sir Sayyid, *Al-Khutbat al-Ahmadiyya*, p. 662.
155. Khawja Ahmad Din, *Bayan Lin Nas*, IV, p. 2.
156. Baljon, *Modern Muslim Koran Interpretation*, p. 17.
157. *Tafsir al-Quran*, Agra, vol. III, p. 228.
158. al-Numan, *Asas al-Tawil*, Beirut, 1960, p. 211.
159. *ibid.*, p. 193.
160. *ibid.*, p. 302.
161. *ibid.*, p. 127.
162. *ibid.*, p., 264. "ha" used for Faminine gender is also sacrificed for metaphor.
163. *ibid.*, p. 303.
164. *ibid.*, p. 304.
165. *ibid.*, p. 123.
166. *ibid.*, p. 16.
167. *ibid.*, p. 98.
168. *ibid.*, p. 134.
169. al-Dhabi, *al-Tafsir wal Mufasssirun*, vol. II, p. 277.
170. *ibid.*, p. 267.
171. *ibid.*, p. 273.
172. *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 161.
173. *ibid.*, p. 361.

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