

THE QUR'AN

First, let's look at the Hadith, and how it affects current Islamic teachings about the Quran. Using Islamic language or terminology, the Hadith refers to statements or events of Muhammad, or something which was done directly in his presence. Most Hadith "specialists" or "scholars" say the Hadith contains events attributed to the Muhammad but which are not found in the Quran. If indeed the Hadith is inspired, why do the two largest denominations of Islam, Shi'a and Sunni, have different sets of Hadith collections?

The two major aspects of a Hadith are 1.) The text which contains the actual narrative, and 2.) The chain of narrators which documents the route by which the report was transmitted. According to Islamic teaching, the companions of Muhammad were the first to hear the sayings of the "Hadith" and they passed them on verbally. Then, those which heard the saying would pass the saying on and indicate who they heard it from. For example, "I heard Muhammad say", "I heard Joe, who heard Muhammad say, and the process would continue. This continued for about 150 years after Muhammad's death in AD 632. It is much like playing the game "telephone" when you were a child, and would all stand in a row repeating a phrase, and when you got to the last person he would say the phrase out loud. If you remember in that game, the final phrase did not usually match the starting phrase. Thus, the Hadith should give any reasonable scholar doubt about both its accuracy and claim of "inspiration".

By the 9th century, there were many different Hadiths in existence. Many of these Hadiths contradicted other Hadiths which were in existence and offered different views on what most Islamic Scholars would call important doctrine. This caused serious problems because the scholars had to decide which Hadiths (which were not recorded in their presence) were to be considered trust-worthy and authentic. One of the many differences between Islam and Christianity is that we do not rely on the words of men, but only on the verbally inspired words of the Bible.

As stated by an Islamic source: "According to Muslims, the Hadith is almost equal in importance to the Quran. Dr. Mazhar U. Kazi, in the introduction to his A Treasury of Ahadith states that "all the sayings, sermons, and utterances of the Prophet were divinely inspired. In Arabic these are known as Ahadith (singular: Hadith)." Dr. Kazi goes on to say that "all of the actions and deeds of the Prophet were also divinely inspired." Dr. Kazi summarizes his view on the traditions with clarity:" and "The sunnah and Ahadith are not to be taken as the wise sayings of sages and philosophers or the verdicts of rulers and leaders. One should believe with full conviction that the words and actions of the Prophet represent the will of Allah, and thus one has to follow and obey them in each and every circumstance of life." Although not all, many Muslims would consider the Hadiths inspired, even though some Hadiths directly contradict or oppose other Hadiths.

What does the Quran teach about how it came into existence?

In multiple places, the Quran states that it was sent down “completed” on a specific night. According to Islamic teaching, Ramadan is the month in which the Quran was sent down.

We have indeed revealed this (Message) in the Night of Power: And what will explain to thee what the night of power is? The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. Therein come down the angels and the Spirit by God's permission, on every errand: Peace!...This until the rise of morn! (Surah 97:1-5)

Ha-Mim. By the Book that makes things clear; We sent it down during a Blessed Night: for We (ever) wish to warn (against Evil). In the (Night) is made distinct every affair of wisdom, By command, from Our Presence. For We (ever) send (revelations), As Mercy from thy Lord: for He hears and knows (all things); The Lord of the heavens and the earth and all between them, if ye (but) have an assured faith. (Surah 44:1-7)

The above passages declare that the entirety of the Muslim scripture was "revealed" all at once. At no time do the texts speak of the Quran being sent down in parts or sections, but rather that it was given on a specific night in the month of Ramadan. Additionally, the Majority of Islamic Scholars hold this view, even though it contradicts other well-known passages in the Quran.

We sent down the (Qur'an) in Truth, and in Truth has it descended: and We sent thee but to give Glad Tidings and to warn (sinners). (It is) a Qur'an which We have divided (into parts from time to time), in order that thou mightest recite it to men at intervals: We have revealed it by stages. Say: "Whether ye believe in it or not, it is true that those who were given knowledge beforehand, when it is recited to them, fall down on their faces in humble prostration, "And they say: 'Glory to our Lord! Truly has the promise of our Lord been fulfilled!' (Surah 17:105-108)

Those who reject Faith say: "Why is not the Qur'an revealed to him all at once? Thus (is it revealed), that We may strengthen thy heart thereby, and We have rehearsed it to thee in slow, well-arranged stages, gradually. (Surah 25:32)

It is easy to see, even by a novice to the teachings of Islam, that there are many inconsistencies in how the Quran came into existence. Obviously, these statements contradict the other statements which indicate it was delivered in one night. To counteract this problem, the “scholars” had to come up with an explanation. Their solution was to claim that the entire Quran was sent down from Allah to the lowest heaven, where it would then remain. Allah then sent Gabriel to reveal portions of the Quran to Muhammad over a period of twenty three years. The problem with this solution, like the hadith, is that neither is supported by the teachings of the Quran, and therefore cannot be considered reliable by any true scholar of the truth. Many Islamic “scholars” have tried to explain this contradiction “away”, yet none have given support from the Quran to support their apparent answers to the problem.

Another Islamic source states: “(The month of Ramadan is) the month in (which was revealed the Qur'an) whereupon Gabriel brought down the ENTIRE Qur'an to the first heaven, dictated it to the scribes among the angels (al-safarah) and then took it down to Muhammad (pbuh) day after day, sometimes revealing to him just one, two or three verses and sometimes an entire surah, ...”

The answers from the many “scholars” do not solve the issue at hand. The Quran declares it was “completed” on a specific night and that it was also “revealed in stages”. One thing I find interesting in studying erroneous doctrines, is that most which hold these doctrines feel the need to give lengthy commentaries to force the text to fit their doctrine. The same is true in this case.

What part did Muhammad play in the creation of the Quran?

When the question is asked "Didn't Muhammad make up and write the Quran himself?" All educated Muslims will tell you “No” and then make a claim. Muhammad could not have written the Quran because he was illiterate. It is a well-documented fact that Muhammad could neither read nor write. So the question then becomes “If Muhammad did not write the Quran, how did the Quran come into existence? This is where many Muslims will make the claim that it was given by inspiration to Muhammad.

According to many Islamic “scholars”, the Quran was given to Muhammad in oral form from the Gabriel the angel, memorized by him, and then he recited it orally to his followers. After his death, his contemporaries took it upon themselves to record his sayings as their memory allowed. This causes serious issues. Even if Muhammad received an inspired message (which such is not believed), those who recorded the teachings of Muhammad would need to be inspired to prevent error during the recording of the text. However, the Bible claims all the men which recorded the books of the Bible were inspired, and the lack of contradictions and harmony of the writings attest to this claim. Whereas, the contradictions, of which we have only looked at a few in this lesson, demonstrate the lack of inspiration in the creation of the Quran.

Abu Bakr is given the credit for collecting the writings of Muhammad’s sayings, collecting oral traditions not yet recorded, and compiling them into a written form which is now called the Quran. After his completion of ‘his’ Quran, problems arose due to disagreements of both what was included and not included in the Quran. Some thought items were added which Muhammad did not say, and others through many of Muhammad’s sayings were left out. Another problem was that differing Muslim communities were using different versions which did not match Bakr’s Quran.

Christianity has had many of the same claims of textual error, yet textual criticism, or the study of early documents demonstrate that what was written in the early Biblical fragments is consistent with current versions of the Bible which are accurate to the Greek and Hebrew. However, most Muslims do not believe in the use of textual criticism to prove the accuracy of

the Quran. Not only does the Quran fail the textual criticism test, it also fails the test in basic biblical history. Although the Quran has many historical and geographical errors, a simple example of this is the Quran's recording of the nine plagues against Pharaoh, whereas the Bible claims ten. (cf. Ex 7:14–12:36).

To Moses We did give Nine Clear Signs: As the Children of Israel: when he came to them, Pharaoh said to him: "O Moses! I consider thee, indeed, to have been worked upon by sorcery!" (Surah 17:101)

Another problem with the Quran is the apparent lack of unity to the order of the texts. The Quran is placed together much like a puzzle in which all pieces are squares. It simply does not fit together in an orderly fashion which would yield the picture that "Islamic Scholars" want you to see. When reading the Quran, often times you will see a phrase which seems to have no reason for being placed there.

Finally, after looking at all the evidence on how the Quran came into existence, and all the discrepancies which are associated with this subject, let's look at one last verse.

Do they not consider the Qur'an (with care)? Had it been from other Than God, they would surely have found therein Much discrepancy. (Surah 4:82)

Hopefully, this study will show the discrepancies associated with what the Quran and Hadith(s) teach about how it came into existence, the manner in which the texts were recorded, and the fact that many versions of the Quran were in existence at the same time. Just as the Quran states in Surah 4:82, if discrepancies are found in the Quran, then neither the Quran nor the religion stemming from it can be from God.

Review Questions

Question 1) Explain the process as to how the Hadith came about?

Question 2) Discuss how the Qur'an came into existence? Did Muhammad write it?

Question 3) Explain the difference of Biblical claims of inspiration as compared to Quranic claims? Does the Qur'an claim that Muhammad was inspired? Does it claim the writers who wrote about Muhammad inspired? Does Paul claim inspiration (cf. 1 Cor 14:37) or does he just say, "Jesus was inspired and now I am writing about Jesus"?

Question 4) Who is Abu Bakr and how is he involved with the Qur'an and disagreements between Muslims.

Question 5) What does the Qur'an teach about the plagues of Egypt?

Works Cited

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