

The Qur`anic Concept of Miracles (Mu`jizat)

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INTRODUCTION:

"Miracle" is so vast a subject that it requires volumes to be discussed in detail. If, on the one hand, David Hume and Spinoza (being hostile critics of miracles) insisted on its 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 But very little attention has been paid to the Islamic concept of miracles. The article on "Mu'djiza" in the Encyclopaedia of Islam is even less than half a page. Even that brief article is a misrepresentation of the Islamic concept of the miracles. This small article is an attempt to present the true picture of the Islamic view point about miracles.

Definition of "Miracle"

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 "anything beyond human power and deviating from the common action of Nature"⁷ Many define miracles as "purely natural fact which especially arouses sentiments of piety."⁸ Some opine that miracle is, "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

From the above definitions, leaving the discussion of its being "purely nature fact" or "deviating from the common action of Nature" it is clear that in non-Islamic theology there is no distinction between a miracle of a prophet or that of a saint: the term miracle is applied generally. But in Islamic theology there are separate words to denote and differentiate the wonderful events. The technical term to signify the miracles of prophets is "*mujiza*" and

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that of saint is "*karamat*" literally regard or consideration, while gradual spiritual achievement for a non-Muslim is "*istidraj*."

Definition of Mu'jiza

The word Mu'jiza is derived from 'ajz' (عجز) which literally means¹¹ according to Raghib Isfahani:

"العجز اصله التأخر عن الشيء أو حصوله عند عجز الأمر أي موخره وصار في التعارف اسماً للقصور عن فعل الشيء"¹²

(To refrain from a thing or to receive a thing at a time when its proper time has passed away but generally the word is considered to mean to be unable.)

In the Holy Qur'an the word is used in its original meaning;

"قال يويلتني اعجزت أن أكون مثل هذا الغراب فأواري سوءة اخي"¹³

(He said, woe me! do I lack the strength that I should be like this crow and cover the dead body of my brother.) But the word *a'jaza*; means to weaken, to disable, the Holy Qur'an says:

وما انتم بمعجزين في الأرض ،¹⁴ and فاعلموا أنكم غير معجزى الله ،¹⁵

(And know that you cannot weaken Allah) (and you cannot escape in the earth)

Thus the word Mu'jiz or 'mul'jiza' literally means any thing which incapacitates.¹⁶ Taftazani defines 'mul'jiza': "A thing deviating from the usual course of things, appearing at the hand of this, of him who claims to be a prophet as a challenge to those who deny to 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."¹⁷

A more comprehensive and technical definition of 'mul'jiza' appears in "عمده عقيدة اهل السنة والجماعة"، by Abul Barkat al-Nasafi, a book which explains almost all the fundamental doctrines of Islamic theology, as under:

"المعجزة وهى ظهور امر الهى خارق للعادة فى دار التكليف لاطهار صدق مدعى

النبوة،

(Miracle is the manifestation of the order of God surpassing the order of nature in this world, to prove the sincerity of the claimant of prophethood.)

A similar definition is given in al-Iji's "*Mawaqif*", a comprehensive study of the formularies of Islamic faith and according to Wensinck,¹⁹ a complete and systematic description of the subject. He defines "mu'jiza" as under:

"المعجزة وهى بحسب اصطلاح عندنا عبارة عن ما قصد به اظهار الصدق من

ادعى انه رسول الله،،"

(Miracle, according to our terminology is to prove the sincerity of him who claims to be a 'prophet of God").

The objection of the orientalis on the word "mu'jiza" and its baselessness: The word 'mu'jiza' neither occurs in the Holy Qur'an nor in the tradition but the Holy Qur'an generally mentions the word 'ayat' (sign) instead of 'mu'jiza'. It is strange that the orientalis have exploited this very fact and made explicitly wrong conclusions "It (the word mu'jiza) does not occur in the Koran, which denies 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, especially those of Muhammad, occur in the sira and hadith. Yet in this literature, the term 'mudjiza' 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 Abu Hafs Umar al- Nasafi."²¹

The above mentioned objections are due to two reasons:

1. The majority of orientalis study Islamic Literature with a bias and prejudice; the glimpses of the same 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. it is an undeniable fact that miracles of the prophet Noah, Hud, Salih, Abraham, Lot, Jacob, David, Solomon, Yunus, Ayub, Zakaria, Uzair and

especially those of Moses and Jesus are mentioned in the Holy Qur'an (and do not "occur in the sira and Hadith" only).

The Qur'an clearly ascribes miracles to the Holy prophet P. B. U. H. Rendering asunder of the moon,²² ascension of the Holy prophet²³ P. B. U. H. challenge to pray earnestly for the cause of Allah on the liars,²⁴ conferring of favour,²⁵ prophecy about Romans,²⁶ aid at cave "saur"²⁷ informations from Allah,²⁸ Vision of triumph,²⁹ assistance of angels,³⁰ and so many others are cited in the Holy Qur'an. The Holy Qur'an, itself, is an existing miracle of Muhammad P. U. B. H.³¹ Miracle is not the new form of creed but its concept is inseparable from the Holy Qur'an and Hadith literature A great stress has been laid on indicating the word ayat (sign) instead of mu'jiza. So it is discussed somewhat in detail. The Holy Qur'an, along its marvellous rhetoric,³² generally mentions the mu'jiza. The word 'ayat' (an apparent sign) which has a wider sense instead of mu'jiza. The word 'ayat' has been used in the Holy Qur'an in four different meaning:

1. It means a version or piece of the Holy Qur'an³³ because every version in the Holy Qur'an is unprecedented.
2. It means injunction or order.³⁴
3. It means a sign or natural phenomena,³⁵ which is unprecedented.
4. It means miracle:

"God says (to Moses); So go you with our signs, We are with you Hearing and when Pharaoh warned Moses and said:³⁶ 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 his hand and lo it appeared white to the on-lookers Pharaoh said to the chiefs around him: Most surely this is a skilful enchanter."³⁷

It is obvious that the signs (26:15(26.15) and "something manifest" were miracles. There is an point in connection with the use of the word "ayat" in the Holy Qur'an, 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 Lord, that I create for you 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 permissions³⁸ Here Jesus mentions permission of Allah's twice and regards his miracle a sign.

In Hadith literature the same word 'ayat' is used to indicate miracle (Mujiza). Abdullah bin Masood says:³⁹ "كنا نعد الايات بركة" (We used to regard miracles as blessing.) This is because of the wider sense of the word 'ayat' that it has been cited both in the Holy Quran and Hadith literature to denote 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 has been frequently rendered 'mujizat'.⁴¹

The Modernists have no objection on the use of word 'sign' to indicate miracle: All the three words, "works" "signs" "powers" are used by Christ in describing his disciples' miracles by the Evangelists and by friends and critics"⁴²

Further, the accurate word to denote miracle is determined:

"But the stress is on that of which they are signs..... the Love of God."⁴³

So far as their objection on occurrence of the word 'mujiza' in the later literature is concerned, it is a resplendent fact that the terminology of all the sciences, i. e. Hadith, Fiqh, Mysticism, Lexicon, Grammar, Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology etc, came into existence on 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 century".⁴⁴

Due to wider sense of the word 'ayat' it is frequently used in Islamic Literature⁴⁵ to denote miracle and when the term 'Mujiza' first appeared it became a synonym of the same in later literature and we see al-Ghazali using likewise in "*Ihya*" on the opening of his chapter on the miracle of the Holy Prophet⁴⁶

"بيان المعجزات وآياته الدالة على صدقة"

and concluding the chapter he says:

"الى غير ذلك من آياته ومعجزاته صلى الله عليه وسلم"^v

The great theologian Baqillani says:

"ما ظهر على يده صلى الله عليه مسلم من الآيات المباشرة والمعجزات القاهرة"^{٤٥}

Al-Nasafi says:

"واظهره القرآن فهو من اعجب الآيات وابين الدلالات اذ هو اية عقلية باقية دون

كل معجز"^{٤٦}

There are other words *furqan*¹⁵⁰ (distinction between good and evil) *burhan*¹⁵¹ (argument), *bayyinat*¹⁵² (clear arguments) used in the Holy Qur'an to indicate miracles. The early Muslim scholars have used also *'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 (*mutad*) and the non-accustomed (*ghair mutad*). There is a harmony in the ordinary and normal course,⁵³ 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. Similarly the Orientalists have objected and said; 'There is no Nature in orthodox Islam'⁵⁴ They ignored that Muslim scholars have regarded the latter law (usage or accustomed law) 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 creator. Are the births of Adam, Eve, Jesus, (happening in quite three different forms) according to the accustomed law? How did the first bird, first cattle first of all the creatures, even, this

whole universe came into existence? it is obvious that Nature itself is according to the law of Nature.

The basic misunderstanding which compelled rationalists and scientists to contradict miracle is their belief in the concept of 'cause and effect'. Commenting on this, Dr. Qadiri says: Ghazali proved the concept of 'cause and effect' be wrong rationally. Hundred years after him Hume, John Stuart Mill, Spencer and Comte confirmed the same idea.⁵⁵ 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".⁵⁶

He further adds: "if the rejecter of miracles claims that he himself does not know the cause this not knowing the fact does not prove the incredibility of miracles".⁵⁷ The great philosopher Ibn Sina does not consider miracle a violation of nature. Commenting on its possibility, in his celebrated work, "*Isharat*", he says:

"اذا بلغك ان عارفا امسك نفسه عن القوت المرزومدة معتاده فاسجع بالتصديق واعتبر ذلك من مذاهب الطبيعة"⁵⁸

اذا بلغك ان عارفا اطاق بقوته فعلا او تحريكا او حركة تخرج عن وسع مثله فلا تتلقه بكل ذلك الاستنكار فلقد تجد الى سببه سبيلا في اعتبارك مذاهب الطبيعة"⁵⁹

"اذا بلغك ان عارفا حدث عن غيب فاصاب مقدا بشرى او نذير فصدق ولا يتعسر عليك الايمان به فان لذلك في مذاهب الطبيعة اسبابا معلومة"⁶⁰

ولعلك قد تبلغك عن العارفين اخبار تكاد تاتي بقلب العادة فتبادر الى التكذيب وذلك مثل ما يقال ان عارفا استسقى للناس فسقوا او استشفى لهم فشفوا او دعا عليهم فحسف بهم وزلزلوا او هلكوا بوجه آخر او دعاهم فصرف عنهم الوباء والموتان او السعير او الطوفان او خشع لبعضهم سبع او لم ينفر عنه طيرا ومثل ذلك مما لا ياخذ في طريق الممتنع فتوقف ولا تعجل فان لا مثال هذه اسبابا في اسرار الطبيعة"⁶¹

"If you hear that some saint restrained himself from taking his daily meal for a long time, you should believe it and consider it according to nature."

"If you hear that some saint had a power to do an action or move a thing or do some movement the like of which seems to be beyond his power, do not deny all these things, because you may find their cause in accordance with nature."

If you hear that some saint foretold about an unknown thing and it became true whether it were some good news or some warning, believe it. You should not feel any doubt to verify, because there are known reason for its being in accordance with nature."

"And perhaps you may hear about the saints such news that tell something that seems contrary to nature and you intend to reject it; for example, some saint prayed for rain and the people had it; or he prayed for the sick and they were cured; or prayed against some men and earth was made to swallow them and there came an earthquake; or they were destroyed due to some other reason; or the saint prayed for them and they were saved from destruction and the murrain or fire or flood; or a beast humbled itself to some saint or the birds did not go away from him and like of these things do not prove difficult for him to do then you should wait and think and do not be in a hurry because, for such things, there are reasons in the secrets of nature,")

He concludes his discussion as follows:

"والذى يقع له هذا فى جلبة النفس فيكون خيراً رشيداً مزكياً لنفسه فهو ذو معجزة من الانبياء او كرامة من الاولياء وتزيده تزكيتة لنفسه فى هذا المعنى زيادة على مقتضى جلبة فيبلغ المبلغ الاقصى والذى يقع له هذا ثم يكون شريفاً ويستعمله فى الشر فهو الساهر الحبيث"^{١٣}

("And one to whom happens such miracles in a natural disposition and he becomes good, straightforward and righteous person, so he is a prophet with miracles or a saint with "karamat", and this happening of miracles causes increase in his amelioration which is an addition to his natural disposition so he reaches utmost limit while if some supernatural is

and honour them by the occurrence of these miracles. "Wali" literally means "near". So when a man comes near to Lord Almighty by his great obedience and great sincerity, God Almighty comes near to him by His mercy, bounty and Grace.")

The concept of miracle is common belief in the world religions. "Taoist, Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Hindu and Muhammadan all believe in the possibility of miraculous in the case of gifted persons."⁷¹ The Christians' 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 so wrought into the very texture of his ministry"⁷² It is an undeniable fact that all the prophets had be bestowed with miracles:

The last of the prophets has said:

"ما من الانبياء نبي الا اعطى من الايات ما مثله او من او امن عليه البشر"⁷³

(There is none among the prophets but he was given such miracles like of which have been believed by mankind).

But to work miracles was never the end of prophethood. The real miracle of a prophet is his personality, his unblemished high character and his blessed teachings. His duty of prophethood is never to perform miracles only and take strong hold of the people but his duty 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. The first mission of each and every prophet is to centralize the attention of mankind to their Beneficent Merciful Creator to worship Him only and sincerely:

"وما امروا الا ليعبدوا الله مخلصين له الدين"⁷⁴

(And they were not enjoined anything except that they should worship Allah being sincere to Him in obedience).

This mission was not a limited one but to each and every nation a prophet was sent. "ان من امة الا خلا فيها نذير"⁷⁵ (And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them). "لكل قوم هاد"⁷⁶ (For every people there is a guide)

performed by some one and afterwards he becomes wicked and employs it to evil so he is a mischievous wizard"

Razi⁶³ and Tusi⁶⁴ have explained these points nicely in their commentaries. The Orientalists are not happy with the opinion of Ibn Sina:⁶⁵ "The fact of these all orthodox Islam, admits even so philosophical an historian as Ibn Khuldun and a peripatetic philosopher like Ibn Sina."

According to Ash'arites, Miracles are '*Dalail*' (arguments) of prophethood.⁶⁶ Even the later scholars argue likewise,⁶⁷ Ibn Hazam, a strong believer in miracles, has criticised Asharites on their regarding miracle as an argument of the prophethood.⁶⁸ But in reality there is difference of words and not that of the spirit. The great Imam Abu Hanifa Says:

"والايات ثابتة للانبياء والكرامات للاولياء حق"⁶⁹

(The miracles of the prophets and Karamat of the saints are true).

Abul Muntaha explains"

"والايات اى المعجزات ثابتة لانبياء عليهم السلام يعنى ان خوارق العادة التى تصدر عن الانبياء كاحياء الاموات والفجار الماء من بين الاصابع وكعدم احراق النار وغيرها تسمى ايات لان الله تعالى يريد بصدورها عنهم ان تكون علامة ودليلا على نبوتهم وصدقهم - والكرامات للاولياء حق اى الخوارق التى تصدر عن الاولياء تسمى كرامات لان الله تعالى يريد بصدورها عنهم اكرامهم واعزازهم والولى فى اللغة قريب فاذا كان العبد قريباً من حضرة الله تعالى بسبب كثرة طاعته وكثر اخلاصه كا الرب تعالى قريباً منه برحمته وفضله واحسانه"⁷⁰

("Signs or miracles are established for the prophets, peace and blessing of Allah be upon them, it means that all wonderful events which are performed by the prophets, for example, the dead is quickened, the water bursts out from amongst the fingers or the fire does not burn a thing etc., are named "Ayat" or signs. Because by its demonstration it is God's will to make it a sign and argument on their prophet-hood and their truth. The "Karamat" of saints are also true, i.e. the miracles which are performed by the saints are named "Karamat" because the will of God is to regard them

"ولقد بعثنا فى كل امة رسولا ان اعبدوا الله واجتنبوا الطاعات"⁷⁷

(And certainly we raised in every nation a messenger saying: Serve Allah and shun the devil). Noah, Hud, Saleh, Shu'aib, Moses and Jesus all were sent to their nations to fulfil the same purpose.⁷⁸ The same mission was assigned to the Holy Prophet to convey it to all⁸⁹ the men:

"الا تعبدوا الا الله - اننى لكم منه نذير وبشير"⁸⁰

(That you should serve never but Allah, Surely I am to you from Him a warner and a giver of good news).

After conveying the first Divine Message, the duties of prophet are as follows:

"يتلوا عليهم اياته ويزكيهم ويعلمهم الكتب والحكمة"⁸¹

(Reciting to them His messages and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the Wisdom). From the above verse it can be easily concluded that :-

1. A prophet conveys Divine communication to the people.
2. He ameliorates and purifies their hearts.
3. He teaches the Book indicating 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:

"انك لعلى خلق عظيم"⁸²

(And most surely you conform yourself to sublime morality).

The Prophet himself indicated his mission:

"بعثت لاتم حسن الاخلاق"⁸⁴

(I have been sent to complete the sublimity of morals).

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

"لولم تكن بيه آيات بينة - لكان منظره ينبيك بالخبر"⁸⁵

(Had there been no mention of his miracles only a sight of him would assure his prophethood to you).

Commenting on the miracles of the Holy Prophet, Ghazali indicated the same idea:

"بل كانت شمائله واحواله ، شواهد قاطعة بصدقه"⁸⁶

(His character, morals and manners are resplendent proofs of his truth).

It is obvious from the history that Haroon did not demand any miracle from Moses and likewise Khadija, Abu-Bkr and Ali embraced Islam, only believing, Muhammad's noble character. Heraclius on hearing the replies of his enquiries about the Holy Prophet from Abu Sufyan (then an opponent) said:

"ان يك ما تقول فيه حقا فانه نبي"³⁸¹

(If what you say is right then he is surely a Prophet).

Here the question arises, that in the presence of above facts what purpose miracles fulfil? In the light of the Holy Qur'an the first purpose of miracle is to strengthen the belief of the prophet himself. It does not mean that the prophet does not have a strong faith in God but a perceptible proof becomes as a strengthening evidence to his belief as we see in the case of Uzair.⁸⁷

Similar is the case of Abraham so that his heart may feel tranquility.⁸⁸ Moses before going to Pharaoh is fully satisfied by experience and these words, 'Go with your signs; you two and those who follow you shall be uppermost.'⁸⁹ Similarly the Holy Prophet P. B. U. H. has been bestowed with the blessings of ascension.⁹⁰ It is obvious that all the miracles explicitly meant to provide a strong perceptible evidence to their firm belief.

The second important purpose of miracle is to strengthen the belief of the believers. In ordinary circumstances, when there is no clash and conflict with enemies, such miracles appear from the prophets as a testimony to their prophethood. Making mountains and birds declaring glory of God, subservient to David,⁹¹ making the wind blowing violent and the devils subservient to Solomon,⁹² making clouds to give shade and sending 'manna and quails' on Israelites,⁹³ flowing of twelve springs from mountains by the rod of Moses,⁹⁴ healing the blind and the leprous, bringing the dead to life and other miracles performed by Jesus,⁹⁵ assistance of angels,⁹⁶ and innumerable miracles performed by the Holy Prophet⁹⁷ (P. B. U. H.), belong to this category. To tranquilize the heart of the believers, to intensify the faith is the basic motive of this kind of miracles. The Holy Qur'an illuminates this motive itself.

"وما جعله الله الا بشرى ولتطمئن به قلوبكم"⁹⁸

(Allah did not make it but as good news for you, and that you hearts might be at ease thereby).

Abdullah Ibn Masood, an important companion of the Holy Prophet has explicitly indicated the same motive of this kind of miracles:

"وعن عبد الله ابن مسعود قال كنا نعد الايات بركة وانتم تعدونها تخويفاً - كنا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فى سفر فقل الماء فقال اطلبوا فضلة من ماء فجاءوا باناء فيه ما قليل فادخل يده فى الاناء ثم قال حى على الطهور المبارك والبركة من الله ولقد رأيت الماء ينبع من بين اصابع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ولقد كنا نسمع تسبيح الطعام وهو يوكل - رواه البخارى"⁹⁹

("Hazrat Abdullah b. Masud said: We used to reckon the signs as a blessing but you reckon them as something to cause fear. Once when we were on a journey with God's messenger (P. B. U. H.) and there was little water he said: "Look if there is any water left." They brought him a vessel containing a little water, and when he had put his hand into it he said, "Come to the blessed cleansing medium and the blessing from God." I have seen the water spouting between God's messenger's fingers, and we have

been hearing the glorifying of God of food when it was being eaten". (Bukhari transmitted it.)

The third purpose of miracle is to induce the disbelievers and to persuade them to accept the truth. The Holy Qur'an indicates that when the rod of Moses becoming a serpent, devoured what the enchanters had wrought they fell down prostrate and said "we believe in the Lord of Aaron and Moses.¹⁰⁰ On the very threat of Pharaoh that he would cut off their hands and feet on opposite sides and he would certainly crucify them on the trunks of the plam-trees, they simply replied:

"لن نوثرک علی ما جاءنا من البینت والذی فطرنا فاقض ما انت قاض انما تقضى
هذه الحیوة الدنیا انا امننا بربنا لیغفر لنا خطایانا"

(We do not prefer you to what has come to us of clear arguments and to Him who made us, therefore decided 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).

It is obvious that this category of miracles illuminated their hearts. There is a category of the people who embraced Islam in this way. We see that noble men of Qureish embraced Islam on the fulfillment of the prophecy of victory of Romans on Persians.¹⁰²

The fourth purpose of miracle is to persuade the rejecters as we see the history of the prophets that when a prophet claimed prophethood, there were only few good-natured people who accepted him while the majority rejected him and persecuted him. It is obvious that despite their noble character:

1. The prophets are rejected by the mass of people,¹⁰³
- 104 2. Their rejection is regarded the denial of Divine communication.
3. The prophets, being the sincere servants of God carry on their mission with firmness and constancy.¹⁰⁵
4. 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 appear, and the cruel rejecters, after a considerable intermission, are smashed and become a lesson for the coming generation.¹⁰⁶

The main purpose of this kind of miracle is to warn-and- chastise the rejecters. The Holy Quran says: (And we do not send signs but to make (men) fear).

"وما نرسل بالآيات الا تخويفا"¹⁰⁷

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.

"وما منعنا ان نرسل بالآيات الا ان كذب بها الاولون الخ..."

(And nothing hindered Us that we should send signs except that the ancients rejected them and We gave to Thamood she-camel manifest sign, but on her account they did injustice and we do not send 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.
2. It was advisable that God may not send further signs.
3. He gave to Thamood a she-camel, manifest sign.
4. But on her account most of them did injustice.
5. As a result of this, Divine help came to the Prophet Saleh and his believers.
6. The purpose of such miracle is a warning to rejecters.

This was due to the noble sentiments of the Holy Prophet (P. B. U. H.), being the mercy for humanity,¹⁰⁸ who always not only forgave but also prayed for his opponents to embrace the truth, that such kind of miracles to wash out the surface of the earth from disbelievers were not sent.

The Qur'anic concept of miracles is unique as is the Holy Qur'an itself because of its special characteristics.

1. Miracle is not a part of prophethood,¹¹⁰ as is considered in Christianity central doctrine of which is itself based on an alleged miracle. The Holy Qur'an says:

"وما كان لرسول ان ياتي بآية الا باذن الله"

(Nor was it possible for a messenger to bring a sign except with Allah's permission).

Juses, referring his miracles mentions twice that he performs them only with the permission of God.¹¹² The Holy Prophet regards it the blessings from God. "البركة من الله"

Razi says:

"ان المعجزات لما عجز الخلق عنها كان ذلك فعلا من افعال الله تعالى"

2. The real miracle of a prophet is his high resplendent and unblemished character. The Holy Qur'an mentions it as evidence,¹¹⁴ so the criterion of belief in prophethood is the truth of his teachings and never the miracle alone.

3. The prophet is never desirous to show miracles. The Holy Prophet is advised by God to refuse to perform miracles, when demanded by such disbelievers.¹¹⁶⁷

4. The word '*ayat*' (sign) includes both kinds of miracles perceptible to senses and intellectual.¹¹⁷

5. The basic characteristic of Qur'anic concept of miracles 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. But the prophet remains a man of esteemed character and servant of God.¹¹⁸ The miracle is not a purpose in itself. But according to Ibn Rushd it is rather an evidence and a support to make men believe the truth.¹¹⁹

6. The Holy Qur'an, itself is an outstanding evidential intellectual¹²⁰ miracle, uniqueness of which is admitted both by the friends and the foes.^{121r}

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

Notes & Reference

1. *Encyclopaedia of Religions and Ethics*, art. "Miracle".
2. *Dictionary of Bible*, 1914, art. "Miracle".
3. (a) *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Chicago, 1960, V. 15, p. 585
 (b) *Collier's Encyclopaedia*, New York, 1958, V.1 14, p. 4
 (c) *Chambar's Encyclopaedia* (New Revised Edition) Pergamon Press, London, 1967, Vol IX, p. 434.
4. *Colier's Encyclopaedia*, V. 14, P. 4
5. *Chamber's Encyclopaedia*, V. IX, p. 434
6. *The columbia Encyclopaedia*, p. 1180
7. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, V. 15, p. 535.
8. *Collier's Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 14, p.5.
9. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Religions* by E.R. Pike, Newyork, 1959.
10. *World Book Encyclopaedia*.
11. For an etymological discussion see *Kitab-al-Mawaqif*, Egypt, 1907, Vol VIII, p. 222.
12. *Mufradat-al-Qur'an*, Egypt, n. d., p. 325.
13. *Al-Quran*, 5:31.
14. *Ibid.*, 9:2.
15. *Ibid.*, 42:31.
16. Steingass: *Persian English Dictionary*, London.
17. *A commentary on the creed of Islam* by Taftazani, New York, 1950, p. 129. CF. also *Shorter Ency of Islam*, Art. "Mudjiza",
18. *Pillars of the Creed of Sunites*, London, p. 16
19. *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*.
20. *Kitab-al-Mawaqif*, Egypt, 1907, Vol. VIII, p. 222.
21. *Shorter Encyclopadia of Islam* art. "Mudjiza"
22. *Al-Quran*, 54:1-3.

23. Ibid., 17:1.
24. Ibid., 3:60.
25. Ibid., 8:17.
26. Ibid., 30:2.
27. Ibid., 9:40
28. Ibid., 66:3.
29. Ibid., 48:27.
30. Ibid., 3:123 - 125
31. *Al-Quran*, 17:88, 11:13, 10:38 and 2:23.
32. Cf. *Koran, A new translation* by NJ. Dawood: "It is my belief that the Koran is not only one of the greatest book of prophetic literature but also a literary masterpiece of surpassing excellence" (intro- 11)
33. *Al-Qur'an*, 2:41, 5:44, 3:163.
34. Ibid., 6:131.
35. Ibid., 21:32, 1067.
36. Ibid., 7:106-107, 2:145, 2:118.
37. Ibid., 26:15-34. Cf. *Dictionary of Bible*, art, "Moses was given two signs".
38. *Al-Quran*, 3:148, Cf. *Dictionary of Bible*, art. "miracles".
39. *Mishkat, Bab-al-Mujizat*.
40. Mark 16:29. Cf. *Dictionary of Bible*, Edinburg, 914, p.853, mentioning that "the fourth gospel frequently describes the miracles of Jesus as signs".
41. *Kitab-i-Muqaddas*, printed by Pakistan Bible Society, Lahore, 959, (Mark, 16:20).
42. *Encyclopaedia 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 *Sirat-al-Nabi* by Syed Suliaman Nadvi, Vol III. p.213.
46. *Ihya-Ulum al-Din*, Egypt, 1939, Vol. II, p.384.
47. Ibid.
48. *Kitab al-Tamheed*, Beirut, 1957, p. 132.
49. *Umda*, p.17. Cf. also Ibn Hazam who has frequently used this word for miracles

Kitab al-Fasl fil Milal Wal-Ahwa al-Nihal, Egypt, Vol. V. p.2.)

50. *Al-Quran*, 2:53 C.f. Also commentary of *al-Baidawi* under 3:40.
51. *Ibid.*, 28:32
52. *Ibid.*, 5:110
53. *Al-Qur'an*, 48:23, 35:43.
54. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. art. "Karama". Cf. *Mathnavi Maulana Room* who resented this idea nicely in his verses.
55. Dr. Syed Hussain Qadiri: *"Imam Ghazali ka falsfa-i-Madhab-o-Akhlaq*, Delhi, 1961, p.131.
56. *"Ma fil-Islam"* by Prof. Asghar Ali Roohi, vol. 1, vol 1, p. 336, also Cf. *Sirat al-Nabi*, Vol III, p.59.
57. *Ibid.*
58. *Kitab al-Isharat Wal Tanbihat* by Ibn Sina, Leyde, 1892, p: 207.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 208.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 209.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 219.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 220
63. Cf. *Lubab al-Isharat* by Fakhruddin Razi, Egypt.
64. Cf. *Sharhe al-Isharat* by Khawaja Nasir-ud-Din Tusi and Fakhrudin Razi, Egypt.
65. *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, art. "Karama".
66. *Al-Baqillani, Kitab al-Tamheed*, Beirut, 1957, p.132 also see his Work *Ijaz al-Qur'an*, edited by Syed Ahmad Saqar, Egypt.
67. Siddiq Hasan Khan, *al-Inteqad Al-Rajeeh*, Lucknow, p.49.
68. Ibn Hazm: *Kitab al Fasl fil Milal wal Ahwa al-Nihal*, Egypt, vol. V, p.2.
69. Abul Muntaha, *Sharh al-Fiqh al-Akbar*, Hyderabad, Deccan, 1321, p.30.
70. *Ibid.* Cf. also Taftazani, *A commentary on the Creed of Islam*, New York, 1950, pp.129, 137-138.
71. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, art. "Miracle".
72. James Hastinga, *Dictionary of Bible*, Edinburgh, 1914, art. "Miracle".
73. Bukhari. *Kitab al-Jami al-Sahih*, Leyden, 1908, vol. IV p.419.

74. *Al-Qur'an*, : 98:5.
75. *Ibid.*, 35:24.
76. *Ibid.* 13:7.
77. *Ibid.*: 16-36.
78. *Ibid.*, 11:25, 11:50, 11:61, 11:84.
79. *Ibid.*, 34:28.
80. *Ibid.*, 11:2.
81. *Ibid.*, 3:164
82. *Al-Qur'an*, 68:4.
83. *Al-Mishkat*, Delhi, 1375 A.H., p. 432.
84. Yousuf Ismail al-Nabhani, *Jawahir al-Bihar*, vol. I, p.55
85. *Ihya*, vol. 2, p. 384.
86. Qustalani, *Jawahir al-Bukhari*, Egypt, 1940, p.4.
87. *Al-Qur'an* 2:259.
88. *Al-Qur'an*, 2:260
89. *Ibid.*, 28:30-32.
90. *Ibid.*, 17:1.
91. *Ibid.*, 21:79.
92. *Ibid.*, 21:81-82.
93. *Ibid.*, 2:57.
94. *Ibid.*, 2:60.
95. *Ibid.*, 3:39.
96. *Ibid.*, 3:123-125.
97. *Mishkat, Kitab al-Mudjizat*.
98. *Al-Qur'an*, 8:10.
99. *Mishkat, Kitab al-Mudjizat*.
100. *Al-Qur'an*, 20:70
101. *Ibid.*, 20:72-73.
102. *Jami Tirmzi*, Delhi, Vol. II. p. 151.

103. *Al-Qur'an*, 7:64; 7:72; 6:33.
104. *Ibid.*, 6:33.
105. *Ibid.*, 6:34.
106. *Ibid.*, 3:137.
107. *Ibid.*, 17:59.
108. *Ibid.*, 21:107.
109. Cf. Sheikh Ahmad Sirhandi, *Maktoobat*, Cf., also Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi: "Miracle is a fruit of prophethood and not the base of the same" (*Hujjut-ul-Islam*, Deoband, 1359, p.231)
110. Cf. Muhammad Ali, *Religion of Islam*, Lahore, 1936, p. 241.
111. *Al-Qur'an* 40:78.
112. *Ibid.*, 3: 49.
113. *Kitab al-Arabin*, Hyderabad, Deccan, 1353 A.H. p.316.
114. *Al-Qur'an*. 10:16, Cf. Ibn Maskawaih, differentiating between a prophet and non prophet. he says:
 "اما النبي المرسل فانه يتميز عن الناس بخصال كثيرة احدها ان للمرسل ما لا يحتمل الا فيه ويشتميز بها عن غيره ولا تكون مجتمعة في سواه"
- "The messenger of Allah and the prophet is distinguished from other men by his numerous fine qualities; one of them is that the messenger of Allah has such qualities which do not come together but in him and he is distinguished from others by them and they do not combine in any one else) (*Al-Fauazal-Asghar*, Egypt, 1325, p.104).
115. Cf. Ghazali who lays stress on this idea:
 "فمن ذلك الطريق فاطلب اليقين بالنبوة لا من قلب العصاء ثعبانا وشق القمر"
- (So this is the right way to your faith in prophethood strengthened and not to get it from becoming the rod a serpent or rendering the moon asunder.") (*Al-Munqidh min al-dalal*).
116. *Al-Qur'an*: 17:90-93, 15:7-15, Cf. Ibn Hisham, *Al-Sirat al-Nabawiyya*, Egypt, 1936. Vol.II, p.317.
117. Cf. Razi, who has enumerated in detail both kinds of miracles of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. (*Kitab al-Arbain*, p.309-316)
118. *Al-Qur'an*, 21:26; Cf. *Ency. of Religion and religions* by E.R. Pike, art. "VISHNU"

119. Cf. Ibn Rushed, the great muslim philosopher who gives the best opinion:

"ينبغي ان تفهم الامر فى دلالة المعجز على الانبياء اعنى ان المعجز فى العلم والعمل هو الدلالة القطعية على صفة النبوة واما المعجز فى غير ذلك من الافعال فشاهد ومقو"

(*Kitab al-Kashf*, Egypt, 1319, p.79) "you should understand the issue of miracles now they become signs for the prophets. I mean that the miracles pertaining to revealed knowledge and action are absolute arguments for the quality of prophethood and so far the other miracles are concerned which pertain to deeds, they are evidences and sport."

120. Cf. Ghazali:

"ثم لا يتمارى فى تواتر القرآن وهى معجزة الكبرى الباقية بين المخلوق وليس لنبى معجزة باقية سواه"

(So there should be no doubt that the Holy Quran has been continuously, related by successive witnesses and this is the very greatest miracle which is still exists for any other prophet." (*Ihya*, Egypt, 1939, vol. 2, p.388; and Nasfi, *Umda*, p. 17) cf. also Syed Ahmad Saqar :

"ايدى بمعجزات حسية كمعجزات من سبقه من المرسلين وخصه بمعجزة عقلية خالدة وهى انزال القرآن الكريم الذى لو اجتمعت الانس والجن على ان ياتوا بمثله لم يستطيعوا"

(Lord Almighty has aided him with perceptible miracles like those given to earlier prophets and also with an intellectual and exiting miracle the revelation of the Holy Qur'an, that if all the men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of the Quran they could not bring the like of it.) (Introduction, *Ijaz al-Qur'an* by Baqillani, Cf. also Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi: "Intellectual miracle is greater than the perceptible miracles" (*Hujjatul-Islam*, 1359 A.H., p.31).

121. Muhammad Ali, *Religion of Islam*, Lahore, 1950, p.245.