

Miracle of Mi'raj

Mi'raj

Prophet's (pbuh) ascension to Heaven was with his Body

Warnings and Reward

The Commands and Instructions Given in the Mi'raj

Five Times Prayer Made an Obligatory Duty

The Objections Raised Against Prophethood,

The Holy Qur'an - a Miracle

Instructions and Guidance

This important journey is known as *Mi'raj* which literally means ascent or ascension. According to most of the authorities, this miraculous event occurred about one year before -the Hijra. This journey is described in the Holy Qur'an in the following words:

Glory be to Him Who carried His servant from the Sacred Mosque to the distant Mosque the precincts of which We have blessed in order that We might show him some of our signs. (17: 1)

The above verse describes the initial stage of the journey from Makkah to Jerusalem explaining its purpose to be the manifestation of the extraordinary signs of Allah. Another *Surah* of the Holy Qur'an which gives an account of *Mi'raj is 53* and it reveals some detail of the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) experiences in the heavens where he is described as having witnessed the Divine Glory and Manifestation at the closest possible propinquity.

Mi'raj

At last that blessed night came when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was to ascend to heaven in order that the

extraordinarily signs of Allah be shown to him and some special commands and instructions be given to him. The guardians of the heavens were ordered to make preparations to accord a befitting welcome to the special guest who was to arrive. The message was given to Ruh-ul-Amin (Jibril) that Buraq, the heavenly steed be brought. *Bukhari* and Muslim and other reliable collections of *Ahadith*, contain the detail of the night journey. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) described that extraordinary experience in the following words: When I was in Makkah Jibril descended and took me to the Zamzam (the sacred well in *Haram* Sharif of the Ka'bah) and opened my heart and then washed it with water of Zamzam. He then brought a gold basin full of wisdom and faith and after emptying it into my breast he closed it up. Then he (Gabriel) brought an animal (Buraq) to me, which resembled lightening in swiftness and lustre, was of clear white colour, medium in size, smaller than a mule and better than an ass, quick in movement, who could place his hoof at a distance equal to the range of vision. I mounted it and came to Bait-ul-Maqdis and prayed two *Rak'ahs* in it, then tethered it to the ring used by the Prophets. After that Gabriel took me to the first heaven. Gabriel then asked the (gate of the heaven) to be opened and he was asked who he was. He replied: Gabriel. He was again asked: Who is with you? He (Gabriel) said: Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It was said: Has he been sent for? Gabriel replied: He has indeed been sent for. And (the door of the heaven) was opened for us and lo! we saw Adam. He welcomed me and prayed for my good. Then we ascended to the second heaven. Gabriel (peace be upon him) (asked the door of the heaven to be opened) and he was asked who he was. He answered: Gabriel; and he was again asked who is with you? He (Gabriel) replied: Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It was said: Has he been sent for? He replied: He has indeed been sent for. The gate was opened. When I entered 'Isa b. Maryam and Yahya b. Zakariyya (peace be upon them), welcomed me and prayed for my good. Then I was taken to the third heaven and Gabriel asked for the opening (of the door). He was asked: Who are you? He replied: Gabriel. He was again asked: Who is with you? He said: Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It was said: Has he been sent for? He replied: He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and I saw Yusuf (peace be upon him) who had been given half of (world) beauty. Then he ascended with us to the fourth heaven. Gabriel asked for the gate to be opened and it was said: Who is he? He replied: Gabriel. It was again said: Who is with you? He said: Muhammad {peace and blessings of Allah be upon him}. It was said: Has he been sent for? He replied: He has indeed been sent for. The gate was opened for us, and lo! Idris (peace be upon him) was there. He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being (about him) Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, has said: We elevated him (Idris) to the exalted position, Then he ascended with us to the fifth heaven and Gabriel asked for the gate to be opened. It was said: Who

is he? He replied: Gabriel. It was again said: Who is with thee? He replied: Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It was said: Has he been sent for? He replied: He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and then I was with Harun (Aaron) (peace be upon him). He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being. Then I was taken to the sixth heaven. Gabriel asked for the door to be opened. It was said: Who is he? He replied: Gabriel. It was said: Who is with thee? He replied: Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It was said: Has he been sent for? He replied: He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and there I was with Musa (Moses) (peace be upon him). He welcomed me and prayed for my well-being. Then I was taken up to the seventh heaven. Gabriel asked the (gate) to be opened. It was said: Who is he? He said: Gabriel. It was said: Who is with thee? He replied: Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It was said: Has he been sent for? He replied: He has indeed been sent for. (The gate) was opened for us and there I met Ibrahim (Abraham) (peace be upon him). Then I was taken to *Sidrat-ul-Muntaha* (lote-tree of the farthest limit). I saw Paradise and Hell. Then I was shown Bait-ul-Ma'mur and there enter into it seventy thousand angels every day never to (have their turn) to visit this place again. Then Gabriel stopped there and I was presented to the Divine presence. Then Allah revealed to me a revelation and he made obligatory for me fifty prayers every day and night, On my return, I spoke to Moses (peace be upon him) that my followers had been enjoined to pray fifty times. Moses (peace be upon him) said: Your followers cannot perform so many prayers. I have already tried the children of Isra'il. Go back to God and ask for a remission in number. I went back to the presence of God and said that my followers cannot bear (the burden of) so many prayers. The Lord reduced five prayers for me. I reported this to Moses (peace be upon him); he urged me for a further reduction. I again urged my Lord to reduce the number still further. I went again and again in the presence of Allah at the suggestion of Moses (peace be upon him) for reduction in the number of prayers till these were reduced to five only. Moses (peace be upon him) again asked me to implore for further reduction, but I said: I feel ashamed now of repeatedly asking Allah, the Exalted, for the reduction. I accept five daily prayers. Allah commanded that these five prayers shall be rewarded as fifty prayers.

It is also recorded in the *Hadith* that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) led a congregational prayer of the Prophets in Bait-ul-Maqdis. He described the appearance and shape of some of the Prophets. He observed: Musa (peace be upon him) was a man of high stature as if he was of the people of Shanu'a (tribe) and Jesus was a medium-statured man with white and red complexion as if he had just come out of the bath. I saw Ibrahim, and amongst his children, I have the greatest resemblance with

him. He (the Holy Prophet) also made a mention of Malik, guardian of Hell and Dajjal.

Whether the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ascension to Heaven was with his Body or it was a Spiritual Experience in a State of Dream

The account of the *Mi'raj* as given in the Qur'an and *Hadith* is clearly indicative of the fact that it was not a dream but an extraordinary experience. The description in chapter, 17 begins with the glorification of the Lord for the extraordinary favour He had conferred on Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and explains the purpose of the night journey to be the manifestation of the extraordinary signs of Allah. Had it been merely a dream, its special mention was absolutely uncalled for and the limited span of time i.e. part of the night would have been meaningless, because one can have a glimpse of both the worlds in a state of sleep in the fraction of a minute.

Moreover, the expression *Abd* used in the verse of the Holy Qur'an denotes a living human being composed of body and soul together, the soul alone cannot be called body.

During the *Mi'raj*, he rode *Buraq* and drank milk. The acts of riding, drinking are purely concerned with the body. So the ascension of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was bodily Ascension.

It is recorded that as the information about *Mi'raj* spread around, the unbelievers scoffed at it. Had it been a dream, there would have been no occasion for such reaction about it. This event raised a good deal of stir among the people and the sceptical audience plied Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with all sorts of questions.

The Holy Qur'an testifies the bodily Ascension of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in Surah *Najm*:

Then he drew nigh and came down. Till he was at a distance of equal to the length of two bows or even near. And He revealed unto his slave that which He revealed. The heart lied not (in seeing) what it saw. Will you then dispute with him concerning what it seeth.

And verily he saw him yet another time by the Lote-tree of the utmost boundary, nigh unto which is the Garden of Abode. When that which covereth did cover the Lote-tree. The eye turned not aside, nor yet was over-bold. Certainly he (the

Prophet) saw some of the greatest signs of his Lord. (53:6-8)

The well-known scholar of Hadith Iman Nauwwi in his commentary of Sahih Muslim has stated:

The fact is that an overwhelming majority of jurists, Muhaddithin and the scholars agree that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ascended to the heaven with his body. Any person who could carefully reflect over the traditions and the accounts narrated by the companions would be convinced of this truth.

The opinion of the illustrious commentators of Hadiih clearly points to the fact that the Mi'raj was a unique experience of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah blessings of Allah be upon him) in which both the body and soul participated. This view is accepted universally by the Muslim scholars and mystic philosophers of the various schools of thought.

The unique experience of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) led to different reaction. The unbelievers who were looking for a suitable opportunity did not lose time to jeer at the Muslims and their creed. They pestered the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with questions: O Muhammad! You say that you travelled from Ka'ba to Bait-ul-Maqdis at Jerusalem in the part of a night. We would like to know the description thereof and that of the city. They were sure that as he had never gone there before, he would not be able to answer but, to the astonishment of many, the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) replies furnished accurate information about the city, etc.

But for the true Muslims there was nothing strange and unusual about this happening. The Almighty Allah Who is powerful enough to have created the heaven and the earth by an act of His Will, is surely powerful enough to take His messenger to the heaven and show him those signs of His at first hand, which are inaccessible to man otherwise. It is recorded in the Hadith that the unbelievers came to Abu Bakr and inquired whether he believed in the story of his friend Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he went to Jerusalem and then came back within a part of the night. Abu Bakr asked if he had actually said that. "Yes," they answered.

Thereupon he said: 'Yes, I do verify it". The unbelievers then said: Do you testify that Muhammad went to Jerusalem and then returned within the short span of night? He replied: Yes, I am prepared to testify to events even more wonder provoking proving than this one, i.e. the heavenly messages come to the Prophet day and night. This event is more astounding than that. To Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), the acceptance of Mi'raj was just like the acceptance of Prophethood of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It was on this occasion that he earned the title of *as-Siddiq*.

The apt reply given by Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) to very meaningful and beautifully represents the Islamic point of view about God and the universe and their mutual relationship, and the significance of miracles in the scheme of revealed religions.

Mi'raj (Ascension) and the Holy Qur'an:

The Facts, Proclamations, Glad Tidings and

Warnings and Reward

It is generally considered that mention of Mi'raj has been made only in the first four verses of the Surah Bani Isra'il in the Holy Qur'an.

Glorified be He who carried His servant by night from the inviolable place of worship to the Far Distant place of worship the neighbourhood whereof We have blessed, that We might show him of our tokens! Lo! He, only He, is the Hearer, the Seer.

(17:1)

A deep study of this Surah from the beginning to the end would, however, reveal that it contains the undeniable facts and truths about Mi'raj, Commands of Allah, warnings, and consequences of those who disobeyed. The main topics of this Surah are as under:—

- 1) The proclamation that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the Prophet of Qiblatain (the Ka'bah and Bait-al-Maqdis).

- 2) The guardianship of the Jews who hitherto claimed to be the heirs and guardians and held the keys of Bait-al-Maqdis, was going to be finished in accordance with the promise of Allah and handed over to Al-i-Isma'il (family of Ismael).
 - 3) The proclamation that there was no time for further preaching and instructions and that the punishment which they desired as a proof of the truth of the Prophet's mission, was to descend upon them as the Prophet migrated.
 - 4) According to the *Sunnah* of the Prophets, permission was granted to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to migrate and then punishment was inflicted on the arrogant people.
 - 5) The commands of the *Shari'ah* concerning *Mi'raj*.
 - 6) Five times prayer was made obligatory.
 - 7) Reply to the objections raised against Prophethood, Resurrection and miracles.
- e) Evidences from the events of the life of Moses (peace be upon him)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the Prophet of *Qiblatain* (the Ka'bah and Bait-al-Maqdis). The family of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) was most fortunate and blessed in this world. They were the guardians of the holy land. Allah, the Exalted, indicated to Ibrahim (peace be upon him) the boundaries of that land in a dream. But it was said to him in the Torah again and again that if he did not act upon the commands of Allah and affirm his faith in His Prophets, he would be deprived of his position. Two sons, Isma'il and Ishaq had been born to him and the holy land had been divided between the two. Syria was handed over to Ishaq (peace be upon him) whereas Arabia came in the possession of Isma'il (peace be upon him). Bait al-Maqdis is situated in Syria while Ka'bah is in Arabia. The children of Ishaq (peace be upon him) popularly known as Bani Isra'il (Isra'il was the surname of Ya'qub, the son of Ishaq) became the guardians of Bait-al-Maqdis and Banu Isma'il those of the Ka'bah. Among the children of Ibrahim, the Prophets of Bani Isra'il turned their faces in prayer towards Bait-al-Maqdis and those of Bani Isma'il towards the Ka'bah. Before the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) all the prophets who were sent to Arabia or Syria were the guardians of either Ka'bah or Bait al-Maqdis. Just as the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was the embodiment

of the virtues and qualities and salient features of all the prophets, in the same way the rewards and blessings divided among the families of Ishaq and Isma'il combined in the person of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the guardianship of both Bait al-Maqdis and the Ka'bah was entrusted to him, and on this account he is known as *Nabi al-Qiblatain*. Due to this very reason during the *Mi'raj* he was taken from the Sacred Mosque (the Ka'bah) to the Distant Mosque congregational prayer of the prophets in Masjid-i-Aqsa to declare to all those present in the sacred gathering that the ownership of *Qiblatain* has been assigned to him.

The Period and Condition on which the Guardianship of the Holy Land was Entrusted to Bani Isra'il

The guardianship of the holy land was given to Bani Isra'il on acceptance of many conditions and after taking a number of covenants from them, and it was said to them that if they bowed down before anyone except Allah and did not obey the commands of Allah, this exalted position of being the guardians of the holy land would be taken away from them, and they would be reduced to abject misery and servitude. The supremacy and Khilafat and inheritance they held in the times of Dawud and Sulaiman (peace be upon them) were snatched from them by Bakht Nasr (Banu Khadh Nadhr) as punishment for breaking their covenant with Allah. They were expelled from the holy land. Their city and what was therein was totally ruined and Bait-al-Maqdis was razed to the ground. The Torah was torn into pieces.

Bani Isra'il expressed their deep sorrow over this tragedy. They prayed to Allah in great humility and remorse and they were forgiven. During the reign of Persians, once again they had the honour to be the guardians of the holy land. But they forgot the promise they had made with Allah. They began to bow down before the deities and did not care for the teachings of the Torah as a result of which the Greeks and the Romans seized the power from them.

They burnt Bait-ul-Maqdis to ashes and massacred the Jews, broke the sacred vessels of the altar. After the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Bani Isra'il were given the last chance of guardianship and repentance. If they would adopt the right path Allah would take mercy on them otherwise, they would be deprived of this special favour of Allah. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an.

And We gave unto Moses the Scripture, and We appointed it a guidance to the children of Isra'il saying: Choose no guardian beside Me. (They were) the seed of those whom We carried (in the ship) along with Noah. Lo! he was a grateful slave.

And We decreed for the Children of Isra'il in the Scripture: Ye verily will work corruption in the earth twice, and ye will become great tyrants.

So when the time for first of the two came, We roused against you slaves of Ours of great might who ravaged (your) country, and it was a threat performed.

Then We gave you once again your turn against them, and We aided you with wealth and children and made you more in soldiery.

Saying: If ye do good, ye do good for your own souls, and if ye do evil, it is for them (in the like manner) so, when the time for the second (of the judgements) came (We roused against you others of Our slaves) to ravage you and to enter the Temple even as they entered it the first time and to lay waste all they conquered with an utter wasting.

It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you, but if ye repeat (the crime) We shall repeat (the punishment) and We have appointed hell a dungeon for the disbelievers.

(17:2-8)

Final Proclamation to the Unbelievers

The infidels of Makkah said: If your religion is on the right and ours false, then why punishment is not inflicted on us? It was said to them that according to the *Sunnah* of Allah the punishment is not inflicted on a people unless a Prophet of Allah is sent unto them for guidance. It generally happened that the rich, proud and aristocrat people joined hands to suppress the voice of truth and the others who relied on their strength also followed them. They were the people who aspired to become rich and powerful, and were after acquisition of wealth whereas the Muslims were weak and poor. Their aim was success in the Hereafter. The reformers and prophets perform their duties. They are not responsible if a man listens to their call or not and believes or not as every man is responsible for his own deeds. The unbelievers of Makkah were deprived of the guardianship of the Ka'bah on account of their infidelity and disbelief. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

Lo! this Qur'an guideth unto that which is straightest, and giveth tidings unto the believers who do good work that theirs will be a great reward.

And those who believe not in the Hereafter, for them We have prepared a painful doom.

Man prayed for evil as he prayeth for good; for man was very hasty.

And we appoint the night and the day two portents. Then We make dark the portent of the night and We make the portent of the day sight-giving, that ye may seek bounty from your Lord, and that ye may know the computation of the years and the reckoning and everything have We expounded with a clear expounding.

And every man's angury We have fastened to his own neck, and We shall bring forth for him on the Day of Resurrection a book which he will find wide open.

(And it will be said unto him) Read thy book. Thy soul sufficeth as reckoner against thee this day.

Whosoever goeth right, and whosoever erreth, erreth only to its hurt. No laden soul can bear another's load. We never punish until We have sent a messenger.

And when We destroy a township We send commandment to its folk who live at ease, and afterward they commit abomination therein, and so the word of doom hath effect for it, and We annihilate it with complete annihilation.

How many generations have we destroyed since Noah! And Allah sufficeth as knower and Beholder of the sins of His slaves.

Whose desireth that (life) which hasteneth away, We hasten for him therein that We will for whom we please. And afterward we have for him Hell; he will endure the heat thereof condemned, rejected.

And whose desireth the Hereafter and striveth for it with the effort necessary, being a believer; for such, their effort findeth favour (with their Lord).

See how We prefer one after another, and verily the Hereafter will be greater in degrees and greater in preferment. (17: 9-21)

The Commands and Instructions Given in the Mi'raj

After the removal of the Jews and Quraish from their exalted position, the Allah, the Lord of world, sent Gabriel to bring His special servant in His presence that He may grant to him the guardianship of both the Bait al-Maqdis and the Ka'bah and reveal to him His Will and Commands to be followed in all spheres of life by all those, who accept Him a Sovereign. It is said in the Holy Qur'an:

Set not up with Allah any other god (O man) lest thou sit down reprov'd, forsaken.

Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none save Him and (that ye show) kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age with thee, say not "Fie" unto them nor repulse them, but speak unto them a gracious word.

And lower unto them the wing of submission through mercy, and say; My Lord! Have mercy on them both as they did care for me when I was little.

Your Lord is best aware of what is in your mind. If ye are righteous, then lo! He was ever Forgiving unto those who turn (unto) Him.

Give the kinman his due, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and squander not (thy wealth) in wantonness.

Lo! the squanderers were ever brothers of the devils. And the devil was ever an ingrate to his Lord.

But if thou turn away from them, seeking mercy from thy Lord for which thou hopest, then speak unto them a reasonable word.

And let not thy hand be chained to thy neck nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded.

Lo! thy Lord enlargeth the provision for whom He will, and straiteneth (it for whom He will). Lo! He was ever known, seer of His slaves.

Slay not your children, fearing a fall to poverty. We shall provide for them and you. Lo! the slaying of them is a great sin.

And come not near unto adultery. Lo! it is an abomination and an evil way.

And slay not the life which Allah hath forbidden save with right. Whoso is slain wrongfully, We have given power unto his heir, but let him not commit excess in slaying. Lo! he will be helped.

Come not near the wealth of the orphan save with that which is better till he comes to strength; and keep the covenant. Lo! of the covenant it will be asked.

Fill the measure when ye measure, and weigh with a right balance; that is meet, and better in the end.

(O man) follow not that whereof thou hast no knowledge. Lo! the hearing and the sight and the heart of each these it will be asked.

And walk not in the earth exultant. Lo! thou canst not rend the earth, nor canst thou stretch to the height of the hills.

The evil of all that is hateful in the sight of thy Lord. This is (part) of that wisdom wherewith thy Lord hath inspired thee (O Muhammad). And set up not with Allah any other god, lest thou be cast into hell, reprov'd and abandoned.

(17:22-39)

Migration and Punishment

Just as this material world is working according to natural laws which generally know no change, there are certain principles and rules for the spiritual world. One of these principles is that when a messenger is sent to the people, he performs his function of preaching and guiding them to the right path. But those who have evil and mischief in their hearts belie him and do not listen to him. They ask for miracles which are shown to them. Even then, they do not believe, and when all his endeavours prove fruitless, the Prophet is ordained to migrate from that country. Then Allah, the Exalted, inflict punishment on those people. The history of the Prophets bears out this fact. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him), acting upon this principle, migrated from Makkah as the Quraish belied even the greatest sign of Allah i.e. Mi'raj (his Ascension to heavens).

Five Times Prayer Made an Obligatory Duty

As we have said before, five times prayers in every day and night Were enjoined on the believers during *Mi'raj*. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

Establish worship in the going down of the sun until the dark of night and (the recital of) the Qur'an at dawn. Lo! the recital of the Qur'an at dawn is ever witnessed.

And some part of the night for it, a largess for thee. It may be that thy Lord will raise thee to a praised estate.

The word, *Dulukish-Shams* (going down of the sun) indicates the times of the *Zuhr*, *Asr* and *Maghrib* prayers. Al-Islam follows the religion of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and in the times of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) the worship of the sun and stars was common (and even now this ancient rite is in vogue in some countries) according to which the periods of worship were fixed keeping in view the time when the light of the sun was fully brightened. The times of worship were fixed between the rising of the sun till the meridian i.e. the highest point reached by the sun. Contrary to this, the times of prayer for the *Ummah* of Ibrahim were fixed after the declining of the sun and the light. The time for *Zuhr* commences when the sun declines after reaching the highest point (the meridian). The time for *Asr* begins after *Zuhr*. It is also the time of declining of the sun and the time of *Maghrib* begins with the setting of the sun. The time for '*Isha*' prayer begins when even the last sign i.e. redness of the sun disappears. The time for the dawn prayer starts when the light of the stars becomes dim. In short, there is a great wisdom behind the five obligatory prayers and the times at which they are ordained to be performed.

The Prayer for Migration

Then the prayer for Migration was revealed and immediately after it, the glad tidings of the conquest of Makkah were conveyed to him:

And say: My Lord! cause me to come in with a firm incoming and to go out with a firm outgoing. And to give me from Thy presence a sustaining Power.

And say: Truth hath come and falsehood hath vanished away. Lo! falsehood is ever bound to vanish. (17:80, 81)

Then last sentence of the above verse conveys the glad news of the advent of a new era in the history of Islam and the victory of Makkah. So

when the House of Ibrahim Khalil i.e. Ka'bah was being purified of the idols placed therein, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) recited the above prayer.

The Objections Raised Against Prophethood, Qur'an, Resurrection, Mi'raj and Miracles

As the time of the Migration of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was drawing nearer, the answers to the objections raised by the disbelievers of Makkah on account of personal grudge and enmity in their hearts against the Prophethood of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Qur'an, Resurrection, *Mir'aj* and miracles were given so that they might be satisfied and the calamity which was to befall them soon after the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Migration be averted. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

And when We make life pleasant unto man, he turneth away and is averse; and when ill toucheth him he is in despair.

Say: Each one doth according to his rule of conduct, and thy Lord is best aware of him whose way is right.

They will ask thee concerning the Spirit. Say: The Spirit is by command of my Lord, and of knowledge ye have been vouchsafed but little.

And if We willed We could withdraw that which We have revealed unto thee, then wouldst thou find no guardian for thee against Us in respect thereof.

(It is naught) save mercy from thy Lord. Lo! His kindness unto thee was ever great.

Say: Verily, though mankind and the *Jinn* should assemble to produce the like of this Qur'an they could not produce the like thereof though they are helpers of one another.

And verily We have displayed for mankind in this Qur'an all kinds of similitudes, but most of mankind refuse aught save disbelief.

And they say: We will not put faith in thee till thou cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us;

Or thou have a garden of date-palms and grapes, and cause rivers to gush forth therein abundantly;

Or thou cause the heaven to fall upon us peacemeal, as thou has pretended, or bring Allah and the angels a warrant;

Thou have a house of gold; or thou ascend up into heaven, and even then we will put no faith in thine Ascension till thou bring for us a book that we can read. Say (O Muhammad): My Lord be Glorified! Am I naught save a mortal messenger?

Say: If there were in the earth angels walking secure, We had sent down for them from heaven an angel messenger.

Say: Allah sufficeth for a witness between me and you. Lo! He is Knower, Seer of His slaves.

And he whom Allah guideth, he is led aright; while as for him whom Allah sendeth astray, for them thou wilt find no protecting friends besides Him, and we shall assemble them on the Day of Resurrection on their faces, blind, dumb and deaf; their habitation will be hell; whenever it abateth, We increase the flame for them.

That is their reward because they disbelieved Our revelations and said: When we are bones and fragments, shall we for sooth, be raised up as a new creation?

Have they not seen that Allah who created the heavens and the earth is able to create the like of them, and hath appointed for them an end whereof there is no doubt? But the wrong-doers refuse aught save disbelief.

Say (unto them): If ye possessed the treasures of the mercy of my Lord, ye would surely hold them back for fear of spending, for man was ever grudging.
(17:83-100)

Testimony from the Events of the Life of Moses (peace be upon him)

The events of the life of Moses (peace be upon him) and those of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were similar to each other in many respects. Lo! We have sent unto you a messenger as witness against you, even as We sent unto Pharaoh a messenger.

(74: 15)

Just as Moses (peace be upon him) spent his life among the enemies, similarly the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) lived amongst his enemies and just as Moses (peace be upon him) tried his utmost to bring Fir'awn (Pharaoh) to the righteous religion but the latter and his courtiers disbelieved, in the same way the chiefs of the Quraish disbelieved him. At last their persecution of the Muslims increased so much that he (the Holy Prophet) and his followers were constrained to migrate and just as Moses (peace be upon him) conversed with Allah at the Mount of Tur and commands were revealed to him, similarly the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ascended to the heavens popularly known as *Mi'raj* and commands of Allah were revealed to him. Just as after the migration of Moses (peace be upon him) severe punishment was inflicted on Fir'awn (Pharaoh) and his followers and they were drowned in the Red Sea, similarly the Quraish suffered a crushing defeat and loss at the hands of the Muslims in the battle of Badr as punishment from Allah for their misdeeds and disbelief and just as Bani Isra'il captured the kingdom of Syria from Fir'awn (Pharaoh) in the same way the sovereignty of Makkah was handed over by Allah, the Exalted, to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) after his migration from that country. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

And verily We gave unto Moses nine tokens, clear proofs (of Allah's sovereignty) Do but ask the children of Isra'il how he came unto them, then Pharaoh said unto him: Lo! I deem thee one bewitched, O Moses.

He said: In truth thou knowest that none sent down these (portents) save the Lord of the heavens and the earth as proofs, and Lo! (for my part) I deem thee lost, O Pharaoh.

And he wished to save them from the land, but We drowned him and those with him, all together.

And We said unto the children of Isra'il after him: Dwell in the land; but when the promise of the Hereafter cometh to pass We shall bring you as a crowd gathered out of various nations. (17:101 -104)

In the *Surah*, An-Najm of the Holy Qur'an, he has been described in the following words:

By the star when it setteth,
Your comrade erreth not, nor is deceived;
Nor doth he speak of (his own) desire.

It is not save an inspiration that is inspired,
Which one of mighty powers hath taught him,
One vigorous; and he grew clear to view
When he was on the uppermost-horizon.
Then he drew nigh and came down
Till he was (distant) two bows length or even nearer
And He revealed unto His slave that which He revealed.
The heart lied not (in seeing) what he saw.
Will ye then dispute with him concerning what he seeth?
And verily he saw him yet another time
By the lote-tree of the utmost boundary,
Nigh unto which is the Garden of Abode.
When that which covereth did cover the lote-tree
The eye turned not aside nor yet was overbold
Verily he saw one of the greater revelations of his Lord.

(53:1 -18)

The Opening of the Heart

The literal meanings of the word *Sharah* are rending, tearing out or opening. In the terminology of medical science, it stands for anatomy or opening of the body by means of dissection or surgery. In the metaphorical sense it means the commentary, connotation or interpretation or explanation of a book or a piece of literature. Another implication of this word is to open the heart meaning thereby to make the reality of a thing easily understandable. This idiom has frequently been used in the Holy Qur'an and *Ahadith*. *When Moses* (peace be upon him) was ordained to go to Pharaoh, he prayed to Allah:

(Moses said: My Lord! Open my heart
And ease my task for me

And loose a knot from my tongue

That they may understand my saying. (20: 25 - 28)

The opening of the heart was an experience which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had more than once. One such experience is said to have happened in his childhood, while he was in charge of his nurse, Halimah of the tribe of Sa'd. The other well-known experience which has been mentioned in *Sahih Bukhari*, and *Sahih Muslim Nisa'i*, etc., is:

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) relating the experience of Mi'raj said: I was in Ka'bah and Gabriel came and opened my heart and then washed it with the water of Zamzam. He then brought a gold basin full of wisdom and faith and after emptying it into my breast, he closed it up. As the Prophet's life was to be made a perfect model of piety and God-consciousness, it was, therefore, cleaned and purified and filled with faith and wisdom.

The basis of the knowledge of the Prophets is Divine inspirations and the revelations from Allah. This knowledge is the special favour and gift of Allah and unlike human knowledge, it cannot be acquired by personal endeavours of the Prophets. It is known as IIm-i-Ladduni.

It has been said about the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the Holy Qur'an:

Thus relate unto thee (Muhammad) some tidings of that which happened of old, and We have given that from our presence a Reminder. (20:99)

And thus have We inspired in thee (Muhammad) a Spirit of our command. Thou knowest not what the Scripture was, nor what the faith. But We have made it a light whereby We guide whom We will of Our bondmen. And Lo! thou verily dost guide unto a right path. (42:52)

Ibrahim (peace be upon him) said to his father:

O my father! there hath come unto me of knowledge that which came not unto thee. (19: 43)

The Holy Qur'an - a Miracle

Say: Verily, though mankind and the Jinn should assemble to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof though they were helpers one of another.

(17: 88)

Among the signs (miracles) which were granted to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) from Allah, the greatest sign (miracle) was that of the Holy Qur'an. So when the disbelievers demanded miracles, it was said to them:

And they say: Why are not portents sent down upon him from his Lord? Say: Portents are with Allah only, and I am but a plain warner. Is it not enough for them that We have sent down unto them the Scripture which is read unto them?

(29: 50, 51)

And the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also said that as compared with the miracles of the other Prophets (peace be upon them), his Divine revelations stand as the greatest miracle of Allah. Explaining the above verse of the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

There was sent no Prophet amongst the Prophets of Allah but he had been given such signs (miracles) as clever saw them affirmed his faith. And the sign (miracle) which was granted to me was the revelations which descended upon me from Allah. Therefore, I hope that the number *of* my followers would be the largest on the Day *of* Resurrection. This *Hadith elucidates* the following points.

1. Every Prophet had been sent with some signs or miracles.
2. The miracles of the other Prophets were for the time being but the miracle of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) is

extraordinary in the sense that it is abiding and lasting and it will remain till eternity,

3. The impact of this miracle i.e. the Holy Qur'an, is also eternal, enduring, and it will continue to attract and enlighten the people for ever.

Among the signs (miracles) granted to him (the Holy Prophet) This is the only sign about which it has been Stressed by Allah, the Exalted. Himself declaring: Is there anyone who produces the like thereof? Then He says: And if ye do it not and ye can never do it--then guard against the fire prepared for disbelievers.

Say verily, though mankind and the *Jinn* should assemble to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof though they were helpers one of an other.

(17:88)

In the *Surah* Hud, the disbelievers have been asked to produce only ten *Surahs* like the *Surahs* of the Holy Qur'an.

Or they say: He hath invented it. Say: Then bring ten *Surahs*: the like thereof, invented, and call on every one ye can besides Allah, if ye are truthful. (11 : 13)

This challenge is reduced further and they are asked to produce only one *Surah* like any *Surah* of the Holy Qur'an.

If ye are in doubt concerning that We reveal unto Our slave (Muhammad), then produce a *Surah* of the like thereof, and call your witnesses besides Allah if ye are truthful.

And if ye do it not and ye can never do it-then guard yourself against the fire prepared for disbelievers, whose fuel is of men and stones. (2: 23, 24)

In the *Surah* Tur, the disbelievers are asked to produce a speech like the Holy Qur'an.

Or say they: He hath invented it? Nay, but they will not believe.

Then let them produce speech the like thereof, if they are truthful. (52 : 33, 34)

There is consensus of opinion on the point that the Holy Qur'an is a miracle; but it needs to be considered in what sense and why it is called a miracle.

1. According to some *Mu'tazilites*, the style of the Holy Qur'an is not less than a miracle. Its style is quite distinct and different from the Arabian literature, It has a natural, extempore, plain and charming style which was not found among the Arabs. The style of their literature was mainly poetic. The ancient *Kahins* or Arabian oracle mongers' style of prose was difficult and ostentatious. The Holy Qur'an adopted a novel and beautiful style between poetry and prose which the Arabs could not even think. The fluency in reciting the Holy Qur'an, the beautiful beginning and ending of rhymed verses-all these things are but a miracle.

2. As regards the beauty of its language and eloquence, right from *Mu'fazilites* to *Jahiziya* and the *Ash'ariya* all consider the Holy Qur'an as a great miracle.

3. The *Mu'tazilites* and Ibn Hazm Zahin also believe in the miraculous excellence of the Holy Qur'an and Imam Razi affirms this fact. The greatest wonder of the Holy Qur'an is that the Almighty Allah made the tongues of all the Arabs and Non-Arabs speechless and dumb before the Holy Qur'an. The Makkahns demanded of him a miracle, and with remarkable boldness and confidence, Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) appealed as supreme confirmation of his mission to the Qur'an itself. He said: Well then, if the Qur'an were his own composition, other men could rival it. Let them produce verses like it. If they could not then let them accept the Qur'an.

4. According to some scholars, the wonder of the Holy Qur'an lies in unfolding the mysteries of the unseen and the prophecies which are not within the power of a common man.

5. Some 'Ulema' are of the view that the miraculous power of the Holy Qur'an lies in the exposition of hidden realities which are beyond the perception of a human being.

6. In the opinion of some other persons, the main reason for its being a miracle is that human literature can be divided into different categories i.e. superior, inferior, excellent, defective, right, wrong, good, bad, etc., but a study of the Holy Qur'an will reveal that it maintains its excellence and accuracy from the beginning to the end.

7. Some argue that the Holy Qur'an is a miracle as it was not expected that such eloquent words could be heard from the tongue of an unlettered person.

8. Another reason for its being a miracle is that its impressive language stirred and moved the hearts of even those who were least inclined to listen.

9. Some attribute it to the excellent teachings and commandments and instructions (regarding moral conduct and behaviour).

10. In short, the wonders of the Holy Qur'an are so many that it is not possible to explain them all in words. We quote here some verses of the Holy Qur'an in which Allah, the Exalted, has explained the virtues of the Holy Qur'an in His own words:

Clarity and Eloquence

And We know well that they say: Only a man teaches him. The speech of him 'at whom they falsely hint is outlandish, and this is clear Arabic speech. (16:103)

In plain Arabic speech. (26:195)

A lecture in Arabic, containing no crookedness, that haply they may ward off (evil). (39 : 28)

Uniform and Without Contradiction

Will they not ponder on the Qur'an? If it had been from other than Allah they would have found therein much incongruity. (4: 82)

Heart-Moving and Effective

And surely there hath come unto them news whereof the purport should deter.

Effective wisdom; (54: 4,5)

The disbelievers considered the Holy Qur'an as magic and witchcraft due to its deep impact on the heart and mind. The disbelievers asked their men to make a loud noise when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) recited the Holy Qur'an so that the people could not listen to it.

Those who disbelieve say: Heed not this Qur'an, and drown the hearing to it; haply ye may conquer. (41: 26)

Instructions and Guidance

This is the Scripture whereof there is no doubt, a guidance unto those who ward off (evil). (2 : 2)

Lo! this Qur'an guideth unto that which is straightest.

(17:9)

Say (unto them. O Muhammad): Then bring a Scripture from the presence of Allah that giveth clearer guidance than these two (that) I may follow it, if ye are truthful.

(28:49)

Now hath come unto you light from Allah and a plain Scripture. (5: 15)

Lo! those who disbelieve in the Reminder when it cometh unto them (are guilty), for lo! it is an unassailable Scripture.

Falsehood cannot come at it from before it or behind it. (It is) a revelation from the Wise the Owner of Praise.

Naught is said unto thee (Muhammad) save what was said unto messengers before thee. Lo! thy Lord is Owner of forgiveness, and Owner also of dire punishment.

And if We had appointed it a lecture in a foreign tongue they would assuredly have said: If only its verses were expounded (so that we might understand)?

What! A foreign language and an Arab? Say unto them (O Muhammad): For those who believe it is a guidance and a healing; and as for those who disbelieve it is a deafness in their ears and it is blindness for them

(41 : 41-44)

O mankind! There has come unto you an exhortation from your Lord. A balm for that which is in the breasts a guidance and mercy for believers.

(10: 58)

The Inimitability of the Holy Qur'an

Say: Verily, though mankind and the *Jinn* should assemble to produce the like of this Qur'an they could not produce the like thereof. (17:88)

And if ye do it not-and ye can never do it. (2 : 24)

Recital of the Qur'an by an Unlettered Person

And thou (O Muhammad) was not a reader of any scripture before it, nor didst thou write it with thy right hand, for then might those have doubted, who follow falsehood.

But it is clear revelations in the hearts of those who have been given knowledge and none deny our revelations save wrong-doers.

And they say: Why are not portents sent down upon him from his Lord? Say: Portents are with Allah only, and I am but a plain warner.

Is it not enough for them that We have sent down unto thee the Scripture which is read unto them? Lo! herein verily is mercy, and a reminder for folk who believe.

(29 : 48 - 51)

The Promise of Allah for its Protection

And lo! We verily are its guardian. (15: 9)

Unais was a poet of al-Ghifari tribe. He heard about the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He came to Makkah and listened to a few verses of the Holy Qur'an from him (the Holy Prophet) and came back. Abu Dharr said to him: What do the people say about him? He said: They say that he is a poet or a *Kahin* or a magician. Unais who was himself one of the poets said: I have heard the words of a *Kahin* but his words in no way resemble his (*Kahin's*) words. And I also compared his words to the verses of poets but such words cannot be uttered by any poet. By Allah, he is Truthful and they are liars.