

Imagine going to sleep on your bed and waking up on a boat.

What are the first questions you are going to ask those around you?

How did I get here?

What am I doing here?

Where am I going?

These are important questions to ask because you have been thrown onto the boat. The boat is moving forward and you want to know where it is going. Your curiosity in this regard is valid.

You have been thrown into life. *How did you get here? What are you doing here? Where are you going?*

You are a child of your mother. She is a child of her mother. There cannot be an infinite regress of parents, otherwise there would be no children. Humans, like all animals, came from the earth. All life came from the earth. The earth is part of the universe. The universe had a beginning.

There could not have previously been an infinite number of things preceding the universe, otherwise it would not have come into existence. Even if the universe did not have a 'beginning', it must have been dependent on something. There cannot be an infinite regress of dependent things, otherwise everything would depend on something else; an infinite amount of dominoes all falling on one another. Therefore, there was an *eternal uncaused first cause* – a beginner of everything that exists, one which had no beginning in itself. This is the only way to explain the existence of anything. You were ultimately caused by this independent and eternal thing.

The universe is organised to the extent to which it continues to exist and allows life to exist within it. If the independent we have mentioned is responsible for this, then the independent one must have knowledge and will. The universe is one way and not another. This is evidence that there was a choice that was made on how the universe should be. Thus, the first cause must have will. There are laws of nature. The first cause is ultimately responsible for them being in place, since without the first cause, nothing would exist.

So now you know where you came from. You came from the independent first cause who initiated everything and who is ultimately responsible for all things that exist. You did not come from 'nothing', because that is impossible. You did not create yourself, because that is also impossible. There was no infinite regress of created or dependent things because that is impossible.

Where are you going?

You are going to die. But what happens after that? When you lose consciousness, you have dreams. You may be asleep, but you still experience a reality in your unconscious state. If this is the case, why do we assume that all realities will end when consciousness is ultimately lost?

What are you doing here?

You should be doing what everything else in nature is forced to do: comply with the rules of nature. Unlike everything else in creation, you have a choice either to do so or not.

How do you comply with the rules of nature?

You must first know what they are and be given evidence that they are from the independent first cause who brought you into existence.

The first cause can only be one. The first cause must be independent and self-sufficient. This would negate the existence of two independents. Trinitarian and polytheistic notions are therefore invalid because they assume the existence of more than one independent. In the trinity, the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, and the Holy Spirit is almighty. But there are not three ‘almighties’ – the faulty theory goes – but one almighty. This is logically and linguistically impossible and contradictory. By definition, there cannot be many ‘almighties’. For the same reason, there cannot be more than one ultimate cause or creator. There cannot be more than one ultimate will, otherwise there would be cosmic chaos and no organisation. What if these ‘almighties’ compromise? If they do, that means that they are weak and not almighty, because an almighty entity does not need to compromise.

Many humans have claimed to receive divine guidance from the lawmaker. These include Abraham, David, Solomon, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. Extra-Biblical historical evidence is present for many of these humans, such as David, Solomon, Jesus, and Muhammad. These prophets all claimed to be inspired by God and all worshipped One God. All of these prophets, according to the Bible and the Quran, claimed to be prophets for their time and people. The Prophet Muhammad claimed to be a messenger for all times and all people. What evidence is there of this?

At the age of 40, the Prophet Muhammad went to a cave in Mecca and claimed that an angel (Angel Gabriel) spoke to him. He claimed that the Angel had told him to: “Read in the name of your Lord who created; created the human from a clot. Read – your Lord is Most generous. He who taught the human being with the pen; taught him what he knew not” (Quran 96:1-5). He claimed to be the final messenger for all of human kind. He affirmed the prophethood of Abraham, Noah, Moses, and Jesus the Messiah. He called people to worship one God; the independent one. The one who is “one and only, the self-sufficient, the one who has no children and is not a child of anyone, and who nothing is comparable to” (Quran 112:1-4).

The Quran, which the Prophet Muhammad claimed is the final word of God, defines success and the ultimate purpose of life in the following way: “By Time, surely man is in a state of loss, except for those who believe and do good deeds and advise one another towards truth and advice one another towards patience” (Quran 103:1-3). But what evidence did Prophet Muhammad have for his prophethood?

Evidence 1 – Preservation of the Quran

The Quran says: “We have surely sent down the reminder [the Quran] and we will surely preserve it” (Quran 15:9). If a book is meant to be for all of mankind, it is important that its primary recipients as well as those who come after it should have the same access to the book. The Quran is preserved orally through manuscripts as well as through the living Arabic language. Textual variants in manuscripts, as well as in recitation format, are explained by the fact that the Prophet Muhammad had select verses revealed in different dialects. The Quran is preserved through mass transmission from the time of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad until today. We know the names of all of the authorities who have memorised the Quran from the times of the Prophet Muhammad. Books such as *Tabqaat al-Qurraa’*, authored by the fourteenth century scholar Ibn al-Jazari, contain names and evidences of the authorities that received the Quran from the Prophet Muhammad. We also have other manuscripts such as the Topkapi manuscript in Turkey, which has been carbon dated to the time of Uthman (one of Prophet Muhammad’s best friends).

In contrast, the Bible is not preserved. The books of the New Testament were first listed by Athanasius in the fourth century. He was not given authority from God. There is a difference of opinion in Christianity as to how many books are in the Biblical canon. Protestants say there are 66 books; Roman Catholics say 73; Ethiopian Orthodox Christians say 81. There are many manuscripts of the Old and New Testament, yet there is no method of harmonising the contradictory variants between the manuscripts. What is interesting to note is that, although the Quran has variant dialectical readings, none of these readings are contradictory and all of them were legitimised by the Prophet Muhammad.

Some fundamental verses have recently been taken out of some versions of the Bible as an interpolation. These include, for example, the following verse: “For there are three that bear the record in heaven: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one” (1 John, 5:7). If the guidance of God is meant for all people, there cannot be any confusion as to what constitutes the word of God.

Evidence 2 – No Contradictions

The Quran says: “If this book was from other than God, they would have been able to find many contradictions in it” (Quran 4:82). The Quran is the only religious book that indirectly challenges people to find contradictions within it. As we will see in what follows, other religious books (like the Bible) are fraught with contradictions. The lack of contradictions in a book from God may not be a sufficient condition, but it is at least a necessary one. The fact that contradictions exist in other religious books disqualify such books from being regarded as ‘God’s message’.

Evidence 3 – The Quran Challenge

The Quran says: “If you are in any doubt as to what we have sent to our slave, produce a chapter like it if you are truthful and bring your witnesses from other than God if you are truthful” (Quran, 2:23). This challenge of producing something like the Quran was directed to the Arabs of the day, who were

experts in language. Many tried yet none were able to produce a text with any sociological impact whatsoever when compared with the Quran.

Evidence 4 – Prophecies in Islam

The Quran and Hadith (which are the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad also inspired by God) made a number of predictions of the future. Some of these predictions include:

- 1 – The Roman Empire would defeat the Persian Empire at a time when the Roman Empire was on the brink of collapse, and that this would happen in 3-9 years. This materialised as stated in the Quran; see Quran 30:1-6.
- 2 – Warring Muslims will overtake the Arabian Peninsula. See Quran 24:55.
- 3 – Islam will spread eastward and westward to Egypt, Yemen, the Roman Empire, and the Persian Empire. See the Hadith of Thawbaan in Sahih Muslim.
- 4 – There will be an increase in sexual immorality and, as a result, sexually transmitted diseases.
- 5 – Barefoot Arabs will compete to build tall buildings. See the Hadith of Umar in Bukhari.

For a more detailed explanation of these prophecies, as well as a comparison with those of other religions, the book *The Forbidden Prophecies* can be downloaded for free from the iERA website here:

<https://iera.org/shop/the-forbidden-prophecies/>

Evidence 5 – The Quranic Cosmology

When compared to other Abrahamic religions, it is clear that the Quran is the only book which allows for a round earth and expanding universe cosmology in its literal interpretation. The closest thing the Bible comes in reference to the roundness of the earth is a reference to the ‘circle of the earth’ (Isaiah 40:22; Psalms 75:3). It is clear, though, that this is referring to a flat earth that may be supported by pillars.

Through direct interpretation, Quranic cosmology allows for a model of a round earth and expanding universe. Literalist pre-modern scholars, such as Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Ibn Hazm, interpreted the Quran as suggesting that the earth is round based on Quran 39:5 – see *Kitaab Al-Fasl fi al-Milal wa al-Ahwa’ wa al-Nihal* (2/78). In this verse the operative word in Arabic is ‘yukuwuru’ meaning to wrap around into a ball ‘kuraḥ’. From this, Ibn Hazm argued the impossibility of the day and night wrapping around onto a ball if the earth was flat.

The Quranic creation narrative is also radically different from that presented in Genesis in that it does not contradict itself. The account in Genesis, for example, talks about the creation of light, morning,

and evening in the first day, all before the creation of the luminaries in the fourth day. In Isaiah 30:26 states that the 'moon will shine as bright as the sun' and that the sun will shine seven times as much as usual, '... like the seven days all at once' indicating that the sun was shining for 7 days despite being created on the fourth day. More contradictions include the fact that Genesis 1:11 states that plants were created in the 'third day' whereas Genesis 2:5 states that 'no plant had yet sprung up'. Thus, not only is the Genesis account unreservedly uncorrelatable with observable naturalistic phenomenon, but it is contradictory with itself. These contradictions led some of the earliest Biblical commentators to reject the literal interpretations of these narratives, see:

Origen (2017) *On First Principles, Book IV* (translated by Behr, J.). Oxford, Oxford University Press pp.383/384.

It should be noted that some have taken this approach too far and have effectively superimposed scientific meaning into Quranic interpretation. This is problematic, as science is not meant to produce eternal truths. Theories and 'facts' of science are sometimes revised. There is therefore no need for the Quran to perfectly correlate with 21st century scientific discourse, since the discourse is subject to change. Having said this, the Quran operates on a multi-dimensional level which allows people from all generations to engage with it cosmologically.

Evidence 6 – Biology and Embryology

The Quran and authentic Hadith detail how a human develops in the womb of the mother. The terms used include '*nutfah amshaaaj*' (Quran 76:2), which means 'a mixture of male and female emissions' to indicate that both man and woman genetically contribute to the fertilisation process. The word '*alaqah*' (clot), which literally means to cling on to something, is also used to describe the foetus. The Quran goes on to describe the '*mudgha*' (chewed flesh) as a stage of development, and further stages that correspond to muscle and bone growth (Quran 23:14). The Quran also mentions that all living things have been created from water (Quran 21:33). It is relatively easy to correlate these Quranic stages with scientific findings in the 20th and 21st century. This indicates that, unlike the Biblical discourse, the Quranic discourse is not confined to a seventh century Arabian setting.

Evidence 7 – Structure of the Quran

Despite the fact that the Quran was revealed over 23 years in a piecemeal form, it has an incredible sense of being knitted together. In other words, the Quranic *surah* (chapter) is connected from beginning to end, and the ending of one *surah* is connected to the beginning of the next *surah*. This lexical coat-tailing is an incredible feature of the Quranic style and is lexically provable through word construction.

One example of this is the second chapter of the Quran, which ends with a supplication. The third chapter of the Quran also starts and ends with a supplication. See Quran 2:285.

For more information on this, one may refer to Raymond Farrin's *Structure and Quranic Interpretation*.

Evidence 8 – Numerical Precision

The Quran was revealed circumstantially, which means that the Prophet Muhammad could not predict what people were going to ask him. Nevertheless, the Quran has incredible precision when it comes to numerical mention of certain words. For example, when responding to the Christians (who made the case for the divinity of Jesus Christ based on his being conceived with no biological father), the Quran says: 'Surely the similitude of Jesus is that of Adam. He (God) created him from dust and said be! And he was' (Quran 3:59). What is astonishing is that, to emphasise this point, both the names Adam and Jesus are mentioned exactly 25 times in the Quran. Up until this verse, both are also mentioned exactly the same amount of times (seven times each). This is but one of many examples of precise Quranic meticulousness which one could not contrive into the Quran.

It is important to note that while some people have mentioned long lists of supposed mentions of selected words in the Quran, most of these lists do not have a consistent standard.

Evidence 9 – Historical Accuracy

The Quran has a whole chapter dedicated to the Prophet Joseph. The Bible mentions his story in Genesis. Biblical scholars and historians place Joseph's entrance into Egypt in the period of the Middle Kingdom.

Other documents attest to the invasions of the Hyksos, a Semitic people who usurped political control of Egypt during a period from 1700 to 1550 B.C. ... It is possible that these people were more favorable to people like Joseph and his family, and it is also possible that the reference to a pharaoh "who did not know Joseph" (Exod. 1:8) recalls a period when the Hyksos leadership in Egypt was rejected in favor of a new dynasty of native Egyptian kings

Coats, G.W. (1992) Joseph. In: Freedman, D. N., Herion, G. A. (eds.) *Anchor Bible Dictionary*. New York, Doubleday, p. 980.

Interestingly, this was a time when the word 'Pharaoh' was not used to refer to the rulers of Egypt. Thus, historians criticise the Biblical use of the word 'Pharaoh' and see it as evidence of human interpolation, as can be seen by excerpt below.

The use of the title pharaoh may be anachronistic in that Moses in covering the events of the patriarchs in relation to Egypt used the commonly accepted term “pharaoh” even though the title was not in use at the time of the patriarchs (cf Gn 12:15-20; 37:36)

For more information see:

Elwell, W. A., Beitzel, B. J., Buckwalter, H. D., Craigie, P. C., Douglas, J. D., Guelich, R., & Hearn, W. R. (1988). *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible (Vol. 2)*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House, pp. 1668-1669.

Fascinatingly, the Quran precisely mentions the ruler of Egypt in Joseph’s time as ‘King’ (‘*Malik*’ in Arabic) throughout the chapter.

Evidence 10 – Biblical Prophecy of Muhammad

Despite being somewhat corrupted, the Bible remains an interesting historical document with possible remnants of the word of God. In Isaiah 42:11 the Bible says:

Let the desert and its towns praise God;

let the people of Kedar praise him!

Let those who live in the city of Sela

shout for joy from the tops of the mountains!

According to Genesis 25:13, the Kedar are the Arabs. Sela is a name of a mountain range in Medina, the city of Prophet Muhammad. This could not have been about Jesus, since Jesus was sent neither to the Arabian Peninsula nor to the Arab people. Reading the whole chapter in context would indicate that this man was ‘a light to the Gentiles’ who went to war and triumphed over his enemies, and subsequently spread justice all over the world.

Conclusion

Islam teaches that we should submit to God through good deeds such as the five daily prayers, fasting on the month of Ramadan, being good to our parents, and giving charity. Islam also teaches *jihad*, a physical or metaphorical struggle against forces of evil like the Devil. The Quran does not say that we

should force others to convert to the religion of Islam (see Quran 2:256). Instead, it gives humans the choice to make the right decision.