

Conditions For The Scientific Interpretation Of Quran

Muhammad Mugheerah Luqman¹, Dr. Hafiz Anas Nazar², Tahira Ramzan³, Engr. Faizan Hassan⁴, Muhammad Umair ul Haq⁵, Ubaid ur Rehman Ghumman⁶

¹Head of Tarbiyah Department, Riphah International University, Lahore

²Associate Professor, Dept. of Islamic Studies, The University of Lahore, Lahore

³Lecturer, Riphah International University, Lahore

⁴Lecturer, Department of Islamic Studies, Riphah International University, Faisalabad

⁵Lecturer, Riphah International University, Lahore

⁶Lecturer, Riphah International University, Lahore

Abstract

Qur'ān is the book of guidance in all aspects of life. When compared to scientific findings, the faith of today's reader is clearly strengthened. As a result, we grow more convinced of the Qur'ān's inimitability. But there are people who are keen on interpreting the Qur'ān through science which leads to certain problems. One such problem is that often those who rely on science merely for strengthening their belief in Qur'ān are left confused when science changes its view on certain theories that were initially deemed to be conforming with the Qur'ānic explanation of a certain natural phenomenon.

We find a solution by postulating that these interpretations should primarily serve as a reference rather than a proof. There is a narrow line between discussing scientific findings as a source of information and using them to show the Qur'ān's inimitability. Both of these techniques have major differences; yet, they are frequently confused. It is argued that it is permissible to relate the verses of the Qur'ān with the modern scientific discoveries as it falls under the category of "Tafsīr bil-Ra'y" (interpretation by one's personal understanding as opposed to what is reliably transmitted).

However, for doing so, a few guidelines must be established. These include assessing the competency of the exegete, relying on real science rather than mere speculative theories, interpreting within the lexical parameters of the Qur'ānic words and not controverting the classical understanding.

The following article discusses the stipulated conditions and guidelines that are set by the scholars to maintain balance and avoid unrealistic and objectionable interpretations of the Qur'ān.

Introduction

Many Muslims think that the Qur'ān includes a variety of scientific information and that it is possible to unveil those scientific facts and to reinforce one's conviction and faith. It is undeniable that the Qur'ān, being the miracle itself, contains numerous passages on God's creation alluding numerous natural phenomena

that have become much clearer as a result of scientific discoveries. Qur'ān, in general agrees with that as It claims:

"وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ
لِّلْمُسْلِمِينَ."¹

“And We have sent down to you the Book as clarification for all things and as guidance and mercy and good tidings for the Muslims.”

For a Muslim, through the Qur’ān, science has broadened the scope of God-realization. However, we must not overlook certain problems that may arise as a result of ignoring the guidelines put forth by the scholars with respect to Tafsīr bil-Ra’y. The Qur’ān is not primarily a scientific text, it is a book of Guidance. Allāh SWT says about the Qur’ān:

"ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ."²

“This is the Book (the Qur’ān), whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are al-Muttaqūn (the pious).”

It is true, however, that current scientific research aids our comprehension of the Qur’ān, but sometimes our passionate modern scholars go to such lengths to promote their scientific point of view that they become unscientific in the process. There are a number of reasons for this; one might be their lack of understanding what science actually is and what can be considered worthwhile when relating to the Qur’ān.

It is important to note that most of the times, this approach is relied upon by those modern-day scholars who engage in Da’wah with the non-Muslims. One such prominent person is Dr. Zakir Naik who has popularized this approach through his public lectures and sessions. Earlier, it was introduced by the French physician Dr. Maurice Bucaille when he published his book by the name, *The Bible, Qur’an and Science*. Many scholars, especially du‘āt (preachers) later used this

approach and began to popularize what they believed to be scientific miracles of the Qur’ān.

This topic falls under the category of Tafseer bil-Ra’y (interpretation by one’s opinion); however, all the conditions stipulated for this form of exegesis are applied to the scientific interpretation of the Qur’ān as well. For example, only a person who is qualified enough and is capable of forming his opinion in this regard, he is permitted to interpret by means of his opinion; otherwise, even if he has stated the truth, it would still be worthy of criticism.³

Difference between the associated terms

Some proponents who prove science from the Qur’ān make an attempt to differentiate between what is known to be the ‘scientific interpretation of the Qur’ān’ and the ‘scientific miracles found in the Qur’ān’. They argue that when they prove scientific miracles from the Qur’ān, they do not make an attempt to understand Qur’ān from the scientific lens. They are just trying to prove the inimitability of the Qur’ān by bringing forth the modern scientific discoveries and wonders being already mentioned in the Qur’ān 1400 years ago. As for the exegesis, it refers to the human attempt to correctly understand the meanings of the Qur’ān. If he is able to acquire that understanding, then he will be rewarded twice, otherwise he will be given one reward for his effort.⁴

Dr. Musa‘id al-Ṭayyār does not agree with the mentioned distinctio. He believes that both fall under the same category which is Tafsīr bil-Ra’y.⁵ Apparently, there appears to be no difference as in both cases the researcher is claiming that a particular verse of the Qur’ān is

¹ Sūrah al-Naḥl (16:89).

² Sūrah al-Baqarah (02:02).

³ Dr. Musā‘id bin Sulaymān al-Ṭayyār, “*Al-I‘jāz al-‘Ilmi ila Ayn?*,” 2nd Edn. (KSA: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1433 AH) p.19.

⁴ Dr. Zaghlūl Rāghib Muḥammad al-Najjār, “*Al-Samā’ fī al-Qur’ān*,” Fourth Edn. (Beirut: Dar el-Marefah, 2007) p.72.

⁵ Al-Ṭayyār, “*Al-I‘jāz al-‘Ilmi*,” p.62.

referring to such and such scientific phenomenon. However, the intention might be different as also agreed by Dr. al-Najjār that the difference primarily rests upon the intention rather than the outcome.⁶ As this is not mainly the topic of this article; therefore, this point will not be further entertained here.

Stipulated Conditions

The scholars have discussed in detail the conditions that are necessary to be adhered to when dealing with interpreting the Qur'ān in the light of modern scientific discoveries. These principles are briefly discussed with the relevant examples:

Qualification of the modern exegete

The exegete must be qualified enough to understand the limits and the stipulated principles at one hand and on the other, he must have a sound knowledge of what science is and which theories are actually part of the scientific enterprise. Unfortunately, most of the people who indulge into this subject are neither scientists nor experts of the Qur'ānic sciences. They make mistakes in either interpreting the verse correctly or in their choice of scientific theories. For example, Allāh SWT says in the Qur'ān:

"وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا..."⁷

"Thus, We have made you a wasat (middle) nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger be a witness over you."

It is said that this verse of the Qur'ān consists of a 'mind-blowing' mathematical miracle. It is interesting to note that the total number of āyāt

(verses) that Sūrah al-Baqarah comprises of is 286 and in the waṣṭ (middle) of the Sūrah, in āyah 143, Allāh has called us (nation of the Prophet Muḥammad SAW) the Ummatan Waṣṭan (middle nation). So, Allāh chose the middle of the Sūrah to call us the middle nation; hence, the mathematical miracle.⁸

Whether this mathematical miracle is truly a miracle or not, is a different discussion; however, it is important to note that this claim is based on the premise that Sūrah al-Baqarah comprises of 286 āyāt. It is important to note that the Scholars of the Qur'ān differ with regards to the number of verses which Sūrah al-Baqarah comprises of. According to the famous Andalusian Imām, Abū 'Amr al-Dānī (d. 444 AH), Sūrah al-Baqarah is reported to have consisted of 285 verses by the Madani, Makki and Shāmī scholars; 286 by the Kūfī scholars and 287 by the Baṣrī scholars.⁹

In other words, the majority of the scholars consider Sūrah al-Baqarah to be comprising of 285 verses rather than 286. Consequently, this would be a mathematical miracle for only the Kūfī scholars but not others. The notion of a miraculous element could have been considerable if all the scholars had agreed on the number of the verses.

Perhaps, if the author had been aware of the existing difference of opinion, he would have chosen some other example. In the video, it appears, that he was aware of the fact that count of the verses had not taken place at the time of the Prophet SAW, but it is not clear why he chose this example anyway. Is he unaware of the difference in the count of the verses of Sūrah al-Baqarah or

⁶ Al-Najjār, "Al-Samā' fī al-Qur'ān," p. 72.

⁷ Sūrah al-Baqarah (2:143).

⁸ Wonders of Islam, "A Mathematical Miracle in the Quran that will Blow Your Mind," YouTube Video, 2:50, September 19, 2021,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xAifpqAGANE>.

⁹ Uthmān bin Sa'īd al-Dānī, "Al-Bayān fī 'Add Āyi al-Qur'ān," Edited by: Ghānim Qadūri, First End. (Kuwait: Markaz al-Makhtūṭat wa al-Turāth wa al-Wathā'iq, 1994) p.140.

he believes that the miracle can be affirmed even if only a minority group of scholars' opinion constitute such plausibility? (Allāh knows best!)

Dr. al-Ṭayyār argues that it is preferable that a mufassir (exegete) with a sound knowledge of the principles of tafsīr (exegesis) should carry out this task rather than a scientist because a scientist may know science but he wouldn't be able to know to which extent Qur'ānic word allows such conjugation of meaning and the scientific theory.¹⁰

Must not be a pseudo-science

The second stipulated condition is that what is being associated with the meaning of Qur'ān, it must be a scientific theory and must not be a mere speculation or a pseudo-science. Preferably there should be a scientific consensus on the theory, or the scientific community should consider it to be worthwhile.¹¹ How one can determine whether such and such theory is relied upon by the scientific community, is a matter that requires discussion. Likewise, it is also important to determine how science is distinguished from pseudo-science.¹² One such attempt is made by Karl Popper which alludes that the pseudo-science seeks confirmations and science seeks falsifications.¹³

For example, a renowned nuclear-physicist Sultan Bashiruddin Mahmood who has claimed that the energy-crisis can be solved by harnessing the powers of Djinns.¹⁴ The existence of Djinn is a different matter and the mainstream Muslim scholars believe in their existence; however,

harnessing their energy for solving the energy-crisis is not scientific.

Some proponents of the approach have acknowledged the importance of relating only those theories that are robust and have passed through certain tests. Zaheer argues:

A successful scientist deals with every theory and postulation with heavy skepticism. Conviction is hard to win. The idea postulated must pass through several tests and withstand the process of falsification before it is accepted. Yet, when accepted, after rigorous mental exercises and physical experimentations, it is accepted with a pinch of salt. That is, a good scientific mind will always keep in reserve some skepticism, in the face of every proven fact, in caution that it could still be proven wrong, or need modification in its description.¹⁵

Must not contradict the classical interpretation of the Salaf

The third stipulated condition is that the interpretation must not in any way contradict the classical understanding of the Qur'ānic āyah. If the interpretation somehow negates any reliable or proven interpretation, especially the one which is regarded as worthwhile by the scholarly community, then that would be negated, regardless of how much trust the scientific community has invested in that theory.

For example, Allāh SWT says in the Qur'ān:

¹⁰ Al-Ṭayyār, "Al-I'jāz al-'Ilmī," p.90.

¹¹ Al-Samā' fī al-Qur'ān, pp.68 – 69.

¹² Al-Ṭayyār, "Al-I'jāz al-'Ilmī," pp. 23-24.

¹³ For detail refer to: Janet D. Stemwedel, "Drawing the line between science and pseudo-science." Scientific American, October 4, 2011, [https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/doing-](https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/doing-good-science/drawing-the-line-between-science-and-pseudo-science/)

[good-science/drawing-the-line-between-science-and-pseudo-science/](https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/doing-good-science/drawing-the-line-between-science-and-pseudo-science/).

¹⁴ Peter Wonacott, "Inside Pakistan's Drive To Guard Its A-Bombs," November 29, 2007. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB119629674095207239>.

¹⁵ Syed Iqbal Zaheer, "The Inimitable Physical Sciences," (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2016) p.14.

"مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا * وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَضْوَارًا".¹⁶

“What is the matter with you, [that you fear not Allāh (His punishment), and] you hope not for reward (from Allāh or you believe not in His Oneness)? While He has created you in (different) stages.”

Some modern exegetes have tried to prove human biological evolution from the mentioned verse of the Qur’ān.¹⁷ T.O. Shanavas, an Indian-American pediatrician chooses selective readings from the Qur’ān including the mentioned verse and proves evolution to be direly necessary.¹⁸ From an atharī perspective, the classical exegetes not only interpret the verse differently, but their interpretations do not leave room for the theory of biological evolution either.¹⁹

However, it is important to note that a modern scientific interpretation that essentially proves the classical exegesis, can be regarded as worthwhile. In other words, the scientific interpretation cannot disagree by virtue of the principle, but it can definitely reinforce or reaffirm what was understood by the early exegetes (mufassirūn). Additionally, if it does not contradict and mention some additional aspect, then it can still be considered plausible. Allāh SWT says in the Qur’ān:

"أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَلَّن نَّجْمَعُ عِظَامَهُ * بَلَىٰ قَادِرِينَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ نَسْوِيَّ بِنَاتِهِ".²⁰

¹⁶ Sūrah Nūḥ (71:13-14).

¹⁷ For example, watch: ThereIsNoClash, “*Quran confirms evolution and human African roots – There is no Clash*”, YouTube Video, 11:40, April 20, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=82a0tj_rOmU.

¹⁸ T.O. Shanavas, “*Islamic Theory of Evolution: The Missing Link Between Darwin and the Origin*

“Does man (a disbeliever) think that We shall not assemble his bones? Yes, We are Able to put together in perfect order the tips of his fingers.”

After mentioning the scientific facts, Yusuf al-Hajj states:

After the Quraysh pagans denied that mankind would be raised on the Day of Resurrection, they wondered: ‘How is it possible for Allāh to assemble the bones of the dead?’ The of the Worlds replied to them that He was not only capable of assembling the bones of the dead but is also able to perfectly put together the tips of the fingers, which is a small and delicate part of the his body through which man is identified and which differentiates each person from another whatever accident may occur to him. This is a result of scientific discoveries and experiments since the end of the 19th century.”²¹

Must be accurate according to the Arabic Language

It is also stipulated that the Arabic Language should allow such interpretation. If the interpretation is linguistically inaccurate and the lexicologists do not allow such meaning or it is far-fetched, then such meaning should not be associated with the Qur’ān. For example, Allāh SWT says in the Qur’ān:

of Species” (USA: Brainbow Press, 2010) 153 – 160.

¹⁹ For detail, see: Shoaib Ahmed Malik, “*Islam and Evolution*,” (New York: Routledge, 2021) pp.112 – 146.

²⁰ Sūrah al-Qiyāmah (75:3-4).

²¹ Yusuf Al-Hajj Ahmad, “*The Unchallengeable Miracles of the Qur’an*,” Translation: Nasiruddin al-Khattab, Edited by: Huda Khattab, First edn., (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2010) p.293.

"وَالْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ دَحَاهَا."²²

“And after that He spread the earth.”

Some proponents prove the spherical shape of the Earth from the mentioned verse of the Qur’ān. It is plausible as the Arabic language allow such meaning although the classical exegetes have not referred to this description. But this does not go against their interpretation either as argued by al-Ṭayyār.²³

Syed Zaheer comments: “Daḥā in the sense of a sphere is not merely a meaning of the classical times, but rather still used in our times for things of round shape. In Hejaz and parts of Middle-east, an egg is a “dahiyah.” The hole that an ostrich makes for its eggs is “ud-hiyyun” (the round hole). The hole that children make in the ground of playing with marbles, are known as “mid-ha.”²⁴

Must not be hyperbolic

While relating the meaning to the scientific discoveries, the interpretation must not be far-fetched. The context must allow such interpretation. Sometimes, the theory or the scientific fact is reliable, but the context of the verse does not allow that. For example, Allāh SWT says in the Qur’ān:

"وَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ صُنْعَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَتَقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ إِنَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَفْعَلُونَ."²⁵

“And you will see the mountains and think them solid, but they shall pass away as the passing away of the clouds. The Work of Allāh, Who

perfected all things, verily! He is Well-Acquainted with what you do.”

While quoting the mentioned verse, Yusuf al-Hajj says: “The verse proves that all the bodies that experience gravity (like the mountains and seas and the atmosphere among others) also rotate together with the Earth in its daily rotation on its own axis and its annual revolution around the sun.”²⁶

The planetary motion may be a viable scientific fact, but the context of the verse does not imply that. The mentioned verse, as explained by al-Qushayrī, describes the state of the mountains on the Day of Resurrection (Yawm al-Qiyāmah) when the mountains will turn into dust and they would appear like the moving clouds.²⁷ The former verse elucidates this point where Allāh SWT says:

"وَيَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَفَزِعَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَكُلُّ أَتَوْهُ دَاخِرِينَ."²⁸

“And (remember) the Day on which the Trumpet will be blown and all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth, will be terrified except him whom Allāh will (exempt). And all shall come to Him humbled.”

Interpretation must not be confined to the given meaning

It is important that the interpreter or the modern exegete must not confine the meaning of the verse to the scientific theory; because then, it would imply two things:

²² Sūrah al-Nāzi‘āt (79:30).

²³ Refer to: al-Ṭayyār, “Al-I‘jāz al-‘Ilmī,” p.120.

²⁴ Syed Iqbal Zaheer, “*The Inimitable Physical Sciences*,” (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2016) p.45.

²⁵ Sūrah al-Naml (27:88).

²⁶ Yusuf al-Hajj Ahmad, *Scientific Wonders on the Earth and in Space*, First Edn., (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2010) p.22.

²⁷ Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Qurtubī, “*Al-Jami‘ li-Akam al-Quran (Tafseer al-Qurtubi)*,” Edited by: Sālim Muṣṭafā al-Badrī (Beirut: Dar al-Kotob al-Ilmiyah, 2013) 7/160.

²⁸ Sūrah al-Naml (27:87).

- a. Salaf (the righteous predecessors) misunderstood the meaning of the āyah.
- b. People remained ignorant of Allāh's intended meaning until the interpreter had discovered it.

Unfortunately, some proponents have claimed: "There are certain āyāt and the Qur'ānic words, their true meaning was not understood until came the scientific advancement that revealed the depths of those meanings and the Qur'ānic words..."²⁹

Ibn Taymīyah expounds that a Muslim is in need of knowing what Allāh and His Messenger have intended from the words of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. He is also in need of acquainting himself with what the Prophet's companions and their students along with the scholars of Muslims have understood from the meaning of those words. It is so because the Messenger SAW when spoke to his companions with the word of Allāh and his sunnah, he explained to them what he intended by those words. Consequently, ṣaḥābah's knowledge of the meaning of the Qur'ān was far more perfect than their memorization of Its words. Similarly, what they conveyed to their students from Its meaning was far greater than their transmission of Its words.³⁰ One such example is of the mention of spider web in the Qur'ān. Allāh SWT says in the Qur'ān:

"مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنَ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ اتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا وَإِنَّ أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ."³¹

²⁹ Cited in: al-Ṭayyār, "Al-I'jaz al-'Ilmi," pp. 31 – 32.

³⁰ Aḥmad bin 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Ibn Taymīyah, "Majmū' al-Fatāwā," edited by: Anwar al-Bāz, (Mansorah: Dār al-Wafā', 2005) 17/353.

³¹ Sūrah al-'Ankabūt (29:41).

³² Cited in: al-Ṭayyār, "Al-I'jaz al-'Ilmi," pp. 69 – 70.

³³ National Geographic, "Black Widow Spiders," Accessed: December 31, 2021.

"The likeness of those who take Awliyā' (protectors and helpers) other than Allāh is as the likeness of a spider, who builds (for itself) a house, but verily, the frailest (weakest) of houses is the spider's house; if they but knew."

Based on the scientific discovery regarding the tensile strength of a spider's web which is greater than the steel, some people have argued that Qur'ān has mentioned this in the context of mountains, earths, which indicates towards its strength. Therefore, here in this verse, the indication is not towards material strength rather it is towards the family and the social bonds that are severed after woman takes charge of the family rather than man. It is so, because it is scientifically proven that the female spider kills its male after consummating and eats it as well and the children eat each other after coming out of the eggs. Therefore, the male immediately escapes after consummation and endeavors to avoid getting trapped in her web.³²

First of all, this mating ritual is primarily practiced by the Black Widow Spiders and not all of its species.³³ Secondly, this explanation of the web's strength is over simplified.³⁴ Apart from that, the classical exegesis of the Salaf does not coincide with the above explanation. The context, including the tafsīr of the Salaf, both disagree with the above description. The context mainly refers to taking protectors and friends beside Allāh. It does not in any way refer to the social bonds and the consequences of the female's

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/facts/black-widow-spiders>.

³⁴ Forest Preserve District Will County, "Myth Buster: Spider Silk is as Strong as Steel? It's Not Quite So Simple," June 25th, 2020. <https://www.reconnectwithnature.org/news-events/the-buzz/myth-buster-spider-silk-is-as-strong-as-steel>.

dominion in the house. For example, Imām al-Ṭabarī RA explains that the āyah is mainly referring to the weakness and frailty of those who are taken as protectors beside Allāh from the idols and other false deities. They are as flimsy as the house of a spider which does not serve the purpose of providing shelter from the harsh conditions and unwanted circumstances. The purpose of any house is to provide shelter and just like the spider's house is unable to fulfill the very purpose of its existence because of its delicacy, those who are taken as protectors are incapacitated in the same manner in what they are expected to do by their followers.³⁵

Contrary to what is mentioned with regards to science, the classical exegetes have referred to the material aspect of the spider's web rather than the figurative meaning.

Interpretation should mainly be a reference rather than a proof

There is a fine line between mentioning the scientific discoveries as a reference and mentioning them to prove the inimitability of the Qur'ān. Both of these approaches differ significantly; however, often they are confused with each other.³⁶

When using the first approach, the exegete, while glorifying Allāh through His creation, he would speak in general terms rather than making any specific claims and relating them to the verse of the Qur'ān.

For example, Allāh SWT speaks about the process by which the bees make honey:

"ثُمَّ كُلِي مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلًا يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ."³⁷

³⁵ Muḥammad bin Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, "*Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*," Edited by: Aḥmad Ismā'īl Shukānī, (Dar al-Kotob al-Ilmiyah, 2013) 10/142.

"Then, eat of all fruits, and follow the ways of your Lord made easy (for you). There comes forth from their bellies, a drink of varying colour wherein is healing for men. Verily, in this is indeed a sign for people who think."

The first approach whereby the purpose is to mention science mainly for the sake of reference would require the exegete to refrain from interpreting the words 'thamarāt' (fruits) corroborating the modern scientific discoveries – rather, he would prefer choosing the general word shifa' (cure) and would discuss the modern researches regarding the cures that the honey provides. It is important to note that in this context, when one speaks about the modern developments in medicine with respect to honey, he is not interpreting the verse through science; he is simply quoting science in general terms and amazing the listener or the reader with the creation of Allāh. This is similar to mentioning benefits of breastfeeding from the medical point of view. The Qur'ān has commanded the child to be breastfed and science can be referenced for mentioning the benefits but not for specifying the meaning to those discoveries.

Conclusion

A Muslim belief entails that there is nothing beneficial for mankind which the Qur'ān has not discussed or indicated to. The Qur'ān is a miracle in a number of ways. One such aspect is that corresponding natural phenomena do not escape the lexical scope of Its words. Hence, it is not wrong to bring forth such facts if it helps a person to strengthen his conviction. However, as the subject falls under the scope of Tafsīr bil-Ra'y, it is important that the guidelines put forth by the scholars are followed lest a person associates with Qur'ān what is not considered viable by even the scientific community.

³⁶ Al-Tayyar, "Al-I'jaz al-'Ilmi" p. 58.

³⁷ Sūrah al-Naḥl (16:69).

The most important principle in this regard is that it must be consistent with the understanding of the Ṣahābah and their disciples (Salaf), since it is implausible to assume that whatever the Qur'ānic words actually implied remained misunderstood throughout the ages until science came in and proposed certain theories that gave sense to those Qur'ānic āyāt. Additionally, it is important that these phenomena must be referred to mainly as a reference rather than the proof because if the scientists later retracted from them; it would not necessarily challenge the inimitability of the Qur'ān since what was implied was merely quoted as a science rather than the interpretation of a particular verse from the Qur'ān.

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