

STRATEGY OF PEACE AND WAR OF THE HOLY PROPHET (P.B.U.H)

(Comparative study of the Holy Quran and the Bible)

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ABSTRACT: Under the current global situation, it has vitally become important to clarify the confusion of what does actually Quran demands from its followers regarding their relationship with the followers of other faiths. The majority of world population today believes, by the propaganda of print and electronic media that Quran does not tolerate the followers of other faiths and demands harsh and inconsiderate conduct against them. This situation needs to be considered within the frame work of all three religions of Book i.e. Judaism, Christianity and Islam to validate the position of the charges comparing with practical behaviour of the Prophet (p.b.u.h) in order to provide the impartial and unbiased view about this situation. This article presents some of the verses of the Holy Quran and the events from the life of the Holy Prophet of Islam to invalidate such false ideas.

Historical study reveals that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) lived for sixty three years, forty years before being declared as a Prophet and twenty three years as a Prophet. He was commonly known as the most truthful, trustworthy, polite, kind and helpful person in the community and people respected him as the most reliable person in the city of Makkah. His marriage with Sayyidah Khadija (R.A) was also based on the recognition of his high character (fifteen years before his declaration of prophet hood).

After his announcement of prophet hood, majority of the people of Makkah denied their previous perception of him and blamed him to be a "False prophet" that he had no proof for his claim. The situation became worse day by day until he had to migrate to Madina along with his followers. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) was ordained to implement the system of Allah's Deen on the earth. Although, he had to face many hardships to carry out his duties, he had the vision that Allah will certainly grant him the Success in his mission. So after moving to Madina his main objective was to set up a society

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³⁴ Ibid., p. 47.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 49

³⁶ See the same comments by Muṣṭafā Ṣādiq al-Rāfi, *Ijāz al-Qur'ān wal-Balāgha al-Nabawiyya*, p. 202.

³⁷ Hūd, 11: 44.

³⁸ There are several different opinions about Ibn al-Muqaffa', some asserted that he devoted himself to competing with the Qur'an for some time; then he tore what he had composed and felt shy in disclosing it. The atheists think that his *Al-Durrah al-Yatimah* was written by him in a spirit of competition with the Qur'an. It is a small treatise which has been printed several times. There is no proof that Ibn-al-Muqaffa' ever claimed to compete with the Qur'an. It is just a fabrication of the atheists. *Al-Bāqillāni, Ijāz al-Qur'ān*, Vol. 1, p. 50. See also for a comprehensive discussion over this topic: Taqi Usmani, *An Approach to the Qur'anic Sciences*, pp.259-281 and in Syed Muhammad Badrddin 'Alavi, *Inimitability of the Qur'an*, Orientalia, Lahore, 1954, p. 50.

³⁹ Badrddin 'Alavi, *Inimitability of the Qur'an*, pp. 51.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 52.

⁴¹ A description of the work appeared in one of the modern Egyptian journals, *al-Zahra*, volume I, pp. 37, 310, and 589. The perusal of this article clearly indicates that the style of the work is totally different from that of the Qur'an. To blame al-Ma'arri for competing with the Qur'an is totally wrong. In spite of some purely personal or, historical opinions, he expressed excellent opinion about the Qur'an. See Badrddin 'Alavi, *Inimitability of the Qur'an*, pp. 53-54.

⁴² Jawād 'Alī, *al-Mufaṣṣal fi Tarikh al-'Arab Qabl al-Islām*, Baghdad: Dār al-'Ilm lil-malā'yyin, 1976, Vol: 6, pp. 588-89.

⁴³ Ibid., 6: 603-07.

⁴⁴ Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making Of An Image*, Oxford: Oneworld Publications, p. 11.

- ¹⁹ Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sira al-Nabawiyya*, Vol. 1-2, pp. 350-51; Ibn Ishāq, *as-Seyr wa al-Maghāzī*, the version of Ibn Bukair, pp. 154-167.
- ²⁰ Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, Vol. 1-2, pp. 315-16.
- ²¹ Ibn Ishāq, *as-Seyr wa al-Maghāzī*, pp. 205-6. See 'Azamī, Muhammad Mustafa, *The History of the Qur'anic Text From Revelation to Compilation*, Leicester, England: UK, Islamic Academy, 2003, p. 49
- ²² Ibn Ishāq, *As-Seyar wa al-Maghāzī*, edited by Suhail Zakkār, p. 151; Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sira*, Vol. 1-2, pp. 270-71. Azami, p.49
- ²³ Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sira*, Vol. 1-2, p. 373 ; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, i; 206; Also see Azami, Op., Cit., p.50
- ²⁴ Syed Muhammad Badrddin 'Alavi, *Inimitability of the Qur'an*, Lahore: Orientalia, 1954, p. 43; this article was originally appeared in a famous journal "Islamic Culture of Hyderabad Deccan, January 1950.
- ²⁵ Al-Khattābī, *Thalāth Rasā'il fi i'jāz al-Qur'an*, Cairo: Dar al-M'arif, p.50. See for comments Mufti Taqī 'Usmānī, *An Approach to the Qur'anic Sciences*, Karachi: Dār al-Ishā'at, p. 128
- ²⁶ Muṣṭafā Ṣādiq al-Rāf'ī, *I'jāz al-Qur'an wal-Balāgha al-Nabawiyya*, Cairo: Al-Maktaba al-Tijjāriyya al-Kubrā, p. 196
- ²⁷ Ibid., p. 198, al-Khattābī has given the sentence as *الفيل ما الفيل وما اندك ما الفيل له مشفر طويل و ذنب اثيل وما ذاك من خلق ربنا بقتل* , Somebody else had composed the following phrase: *الم تر الى ربك كيف فعل بالهبلى اخرج منها نسمة تسمى بين شراسيف وحشى* , See Al-Khattābī, *Thalāth Rasā'il fi i'jāz al-Qur'an*, pp. 50-51.
- ²⁸ The translation of this sentence is "The elephant, what is the elephant and what did make you know what the elephant is. It has a hard tail and long trunk." Ibid., p. 198.
- ²⁹ Rāf'ī comments on this caricature as *ولعمر الله ما ندرى اكان هذا القرآن ينزل على قلب معلمة او على معدته* ; see footnote Muṣṭafā Ṣādiq al-Rāf'ī, *I'jāz al-Qur'an wal-Balāgha al-Nabawiyya*, p. 198.
- ³⁰ Al-Khattābī, *Thalāth Rasā'il fi i'jāz al-Qur'an*, pp. 50-51
- ³¹ See also Muṣṭafā Ṣādiq al-Rāf'ī, *I'jāz al-Qur'an wal-Balāgha al-Nabawiyya*, p. 198.
- ³² Syed Muhammad Badrddin 'Alavi, *Inimitability of the Qur'an*, Orientalia, Lahore, 1954, p. 46 and also see al-Rāf'ī, *I'jāz al-Qur'an*, p. 199.
- ³³ Ibid.,

NOTES & REFERENCES

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- ¹ Maudūdī, Syed Abul 'Alā, *The Qur'ān: Devine Revelation or Forgery?*, (English Translation by Abu Asad), Karachi: Islamic Research Academy, 1981, p. 19.
- ² Al-Furqan, 25: 4-5
- ³ Briefly extracted from Tafsirī Hashiyah Sheikh al-Hind, Karachi: Dār al-Isha'at, 2000, p.467.
- ⁴ Al-Hijr, 15: 95.
- ⁵ Al-Qaṣṭulānī, Sharḥ al-'Allāmah al-Zurqānī 'alā al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyah bil-Minh al-Muḥammadiyyah, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1996/1417, Vol: 1, pp. 464-465. He also reproduced the poem which Abū Ṭālib read for Prophet's consolation. See Ibid, pp. 463-464.
- ⁶ Al-Hijr, 15: 06
- ⁷ Ṣād, 15: 04
- ⁸ Al-Muddassir, 74: 24-25
- ⁹ Al-Hāqqah, 69: 41-43, for more mockery, ridicule and derision remarks, see Al-An'ām, 53, Al-Furqān, 4 and 5, Al-Niḥal, 103,
- ¹⁰ Al-Nahl, 16: 103
- ¹¹ Al-Ahqaf, 46:8
- ¹² Al-Isrā, 17: 88
- ¹³ Al-Baqarah, 2: 23-24
- ¹⁴ al-Jurjānī, 'Abdul Qāhir, *Ar-Risālah Ash Shāfiyah (in) Rasāil fi 'Aijāz ul-Qurān*, Cairo: Dar ul-Ma'arif, p109
- ¹⁵ Al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Khasā'is al-Kubrā*, Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, V.1, p.113 & *Al-Itqān*, Cairo: al-Mashad al-Hussaini, Vol: .2, pp. 117.
- ¹⁶ Fuṣṣilat, 41: 1-5
- ¹⁷ Ibn Hisham, *Al-Sira al-Nabaviyya*, Cairo: Mustafā al-Bābī al-Halabī, 1955, Vol. 1-2, pp. 293-294; See also A. Guillaume, Translation of the *Sira* by Ibn Hishām, pp. 132-133
- ¹⁸ Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sira al-Nabaviyya*, Vol: 1-2, pp. 293-294.

Rūmī. Many Christian slaves lived in Ṭā'if. One of them was 'Addās, the slave of 'Utbah and Shaybah the sons of Rabī'ah. Another name is of al-Azraq the Roman the blacksmith.⁴³

Norman Daniel comments demonstrating the continuity of this hostile approach and its chief reason is appropriate to be mentioned here:

The earliest Christian reactions to Islam were much the same as they have been until quite recently. The tradition has been continuous and it is still alive. Naturally there has been variety within the wider unity of the tradition, and the European (and American) West has long had its own characteristic view, which was formed in the two centuries or so after 1100, and which has been modified only slowly since. One chief reason for continuity has been not only the normal passage of ideas from one author to the next, but the constant nature of the problem. The points in which Christianity and Islam differ have not changed, so that Christians have always tended to make the same criticisms; and even when, in relatively modern times, some authors have self-consciously tried to emancipate themselves from Christian attitudes, they have not generally been as successful as they thought.⁴⁴

Hence, such propagation by infidels through different means was kept on by their Christian successors like, John of Damascus, Al-Kindī, 'Ammār Al-Baṣrī and others who carried on by giving them modern touch, and same baseless and false accusations about Qur'ān were made.

A clear proof against them is that al-Ma'arrī has himself expressed his views in *al-Ghufrān* in the following words:

واجمع ملحد و مهتد ان هذا الكتاب الذى جا به محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم
كتاب بهر بالاعجاز ولقى عدوه با الارجاز، ما حذى على مثال والا اشبه
غريب الامثال ما هو بالقصيد الموزون ولا الرجز ولا شاكل خطابه العرب
ولا سجع الكهنة .

“An atheist and a guided man have agreed that the book brought by Muhammad has overcome in inimitability and met its enemy with punishments. It has not been based on any pattern and has no resemblance with unfamiliar narration. It is neither a poem, having *metre*, nor *rajaz*. It has no parity with the oratory of the Arabs or with the *saj'* of the diviners.”⁴⁰

Moreover the book which is alleged to have been written in competition is only entitled *al-Fuṣūl wal-Ghāyāt* and the words *فى مجارة* فى مجارة *السور والايات* are only an addition based on suspicion.⁴¹

Missionary Activities in Arabian Peninsula through Slaves

The Christians and other people who were against Islam and Qur'ān tried their level best to eliminate the new born religion Islam and its textual power while making ridiculous buffoons, although they couldn't succeed in their objective, yet, their efforts continued consistently in different shapes till today. They left no stone unturned to put obstacles in the way of Islam; even they used slaves in propagating the aimed goals. It is historically recorded that the Christianity was introduced to the Arabs through the male and female slaves imported to the Arabia from different international markets especially from the Byzantine and Persian empires. Many Roman concubines bore those who were considered the pure Arabs. Most of such concubines were Christian. There were many Christian slaves in Makkah, Tā'if, Yathrib, and other parts of the Arabian Peninsula. They read, wrote, and interpreted what the Tawrāt and the Injīl contained. They told people the Christian tales and explained the Christian religion to them. Some of them succeeded to convert some Arabs.⁴² In Makkah, one of them was Jabr the slave of 'Āmir b. al-Ḥaḍramī. He was a Christian and could read the Tawrāt and the Injīl in his native language. Other Christian slaves include 'Ā'ish the slave of Ḥuwayṭib b. 'Abd al-'Uzzā, 'Addās the slave of al-'Alā' b. al-Ḥaḍramī, Naṣṭās the slave of Ṣafwān b. Umayyah, Mīnā, and Ṣuhayb al-

that a Qur'ān had been revealed to him. A few people followed him. But afterwards he gave up his pretension and lived like an ordinary man.³⁵

6. An-Nadr bin al-Hārith a contemporary of the Prophet whose daughter's verses are cited in al-Hamasah He did not pretend to be a prophet. Some people claimed that he wrote a ' history of the Persians and other stories, with which the Arabs were not familiar, in imitation of the Qur'ān. On account of his foolishness in his assertion no historian has cared to quote his composition.³⁶

7. 'Abdullah bin al-Muqaffa'(d. 142 A.H.) Then again, long after the revelation of the Qur'ān a renowned Arabic man of letters and essayist and translator of *Kalilah wo Dimnah* 'Abd Allah bin al-Muqaffa' (d. 142 A.H.) intended to write a rejoinder to the Qur'ān but just then he heard a child reciting the verse...

وَقِيلَ يَتَّزِضُ آبِلَى مَاءِكِ وَيَسْمَاءُ أَقْلِي وَغِيضَ الْمَاءِ وَقُضِيَ

الْأَمْرُ وَأَسْتَوَتْ عَلَى الْجُودِيِّ وَقِيلَ بُعْدًا لِلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ.³⁷

And at once declared "I testify that it is impossible to echo these words and verily it is not a human composition."³⁸

8. Ahmad b. Yaḥyā Abū al-Ḥussain Al-Rāwandī (d. 293A. H.) was an atheist. He wrote many books against religion and it is said that he is the author of a book called at-Tāj (The Crown). According to Abu'l-Fida, the Muslim scholars refuted all the arguments of al-Rāwandī including his claim to competition with the Qur'ān. Though it is said that he intended to compete with the Qur'ān with his at-Tāj yet there is no proof that he wrote it in a spirit of competition. It is probable, therefore, that in it, as in his other books, he also advanced arguments against the inimitability of the Qur'ān. Al-Ma'arrī has remarked in his *al-Ghufrān* about al-Rāwandī's at-Tāj as follows:

واما تاجه فلا يصلح ان يكون نعلا، وهل تاجه الا كما قالت الكاهنة اف وقف .

"As regards his *Crown* it deserves not to be a sandal. His crown is not but, as the diviners said, fie and dirt."³⁹

9. Abu'l-'Ala al-Ma'arrī (d. 449 A.H.). It is asserted that he compete with the Qur'ān through a book named *الفصول والغايات في مجارة السور والآيات*. It is a baseless allegation of the atheists that the charged al-Ma'arrī with competing with the Qur'ān.

2. Al-Aswad al-'Anasī whose name was 'Abhala bin Ka'b, and his was titled as Zal-Khimār because he used to say *يأتيني ذوخمار*. He was a native of al-Yaman. He was famous for his eloquence, divination, *saj'*, oratory and poetry. He pretended, during the last days of the Prophet, to receive revelations from God but did not claim them to be a Qur'an. When the alleged revelation came to him, he cast down his head and, after a while, raising it said: 'He says to me this and this.' This man was killed twenty-four hours before the death of the Prophet.³²

3. Ṭulayḥah b. Khuwaylid of the tribe of al-Asad was one of the valiant Arabs. He visited the Prophet with the deputation of his tribe in the ninth year of Hijra. He embraced Islam with all his tribe. When he returned home, he claimed prophetic office and acquired a big position after the death of the Prophet. He asserted that one *Zun-Nūn* brought him revelation but laid no claim to a Qur'ān. His people were eloquent and they only followed him for the sake of party spirit and to acquire a kingdom for themselves. Only one of his revelations has been quoted by Yāqūt. The First Caliph sent an army to fight him. A battle took place between the two parties which resulted in the defeat of Ṭulaiha. He then fled to Syria. Afterwards he embraced Islam again and displayed gallantry at the battle of Qādīsia.³³

4. Sajāḥ bint al-Ḥārith, a woman of the tribe of Tamīm who lived with her maternal uncles, the Banū Taghlib. They were Christians. She learned their lore and claimed the prophetic office after the death of the Prophet. Some of her people followed her and she came with them to fight against the First Caliph. On the way she fought with some of the tribes and made peace with others. During this time Musailima had gained power and, on hearing about the mission of Sajāḥ, he became afraid. He met her at an appointed place and offered to marry her. The agreement was reached and the marriage was performed. She did not claim any Qur'ān for herself but, like al-Aswad and Ṭulaiha, asserted that she had revelations and produced some compositions in *saj'*. After the murder of Musailima she gave up her pretension and for a second time came into the fold of Islam and spent the remaining life as Muslim.³⁴

5. Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusain al-Mutanabbī (d. 354 A.H.) a famous poet, killed in 354 AH. In his early days he pretended to the prophetic office and claimed

been sent to them and these events did not reach us.
When this is inconceivable, no less so is the idea that
Qur'an's challenge was met.²⁵

However, some buffoons did compose a few ridiculous things which are still preserved in the pages of history and the Arabs have laughed at them.

1. Musailima, a man of al-Yamāma, pretended to be a prophet during the last days of the Arabian Apostle. He did this after he had visited Medina and embraced Islam. His aim was to acquire a kingdom and he offered his terms for peace to the Apostle to the effect that he should be accepted as a partner or appointed as the Apostle's successor. He formally wrote a letter to Holy Prophet (PBUH) in 10th Hijra, asserting following statement:

"أما بعد : فإني قد شوركت في الأرض معك ، وإنما لنا نصف الأرض
ولقریش نصفها، لكن قریش قوم يعتنون"²⁶

Musailima claimed that the angel *Rahmān* brought him his Qur'an which was divided into sections and sentences. His compositions were in harmony with the saj' of diviners as he asserted the prophetic office to be a part of divination. Here are some of his self made compositions on the style of *Sura "Al-Qāri'ah"* and *Surah "Al-fil"*:

"الفيل ما الفيل وما ادراك ما الفيل له ذنب وبيل وخرطوم طويل".....²⁷

While trying to make a parody of *Sura "Al-Nāzi'āt"*, he asserts:

"والمبخرات زرعاً والحصدات حصداء والذاريات قمحاً والطاحنات طحناً
والماجنات عجناء والخابزات خبزاء والتلردات ثرداء واللاقمات لقماء اهالة وسمناء
لقد فضلتم على اهل الوبر؛ وما سبقكم اهل المدر؛ ريفكم فامنعوه، والمعتر
فأوه؛ ..."²⁸

Another lampoon runs as:

والشاة والرانها؛ واعجبها السود والبانها؛ والشاة السوداء؛ واللبن الابيض؛ انه
لعجب محض؛ وقد حرم المذق فما لكم لا تمجعون .²⁹

As can be seen from this example, the whole composition was foolish and mean. His end proved that he was not a prophet and that his compositions were not revelations. After the death of the Prophet, the First Caliph sent a large army against Musailima and he was put to death, leaving no one to mention him except the Muslims in their histories, and none to mourn him. Musaylimah had claimed the following sentences as "*wahy*" revealed to him:³⁰

يا ضفدع بنت ضفدعين؛ نقي ما تنقين نصفك في الماء ونصفك في الطين؛
لا الماء تكدرين ولا الوارد تنفرين؛ ولا الشارب تمنعين.³¹

History has brought to us the names of some people who have, during the last fourteen hundred years, either themselves competed with the Qur'ān or else their works have been considered by others as competing with it. These people were of two kinds:

1. Those who pretended to be prophets producing a revelation.
2. Those who did the work for the sake of art, and imagined that it was in their power to produce a rival to the Qur'ān or else others thought that it was so.

There were five men in the first category. The result of their mission is proved by their ends as two of them were killed without achieving any success, two became proper Muslims afterwards and the fifth fell back to an ordinary position.²⁴

Al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 388 A.H.) gives a demonstration of some ridiculous statements combating to meet the challenge of Qur'ān. According to him, there are many other instances preserved in the pages of history which denote that great and renowned scholars and poets not only failed to accept the challenge of the Qur'ān but were actually forced to acknowledge the deep penetrating effect of the Qur'ān through their words or actions.

Some non-Muslim writers have expressed the idea that may be someone had responded to the challenge and composed something on the pattern of Qur'ānic verses but possibly they did not reach us. Abū Sulaimān al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 388 A.H.) who was the leading scholar in lexicon and literature, apart from being a renowned scholar in *Ḥadīth* commenting on this view has made a cogent observation in the following words.

This is an absolutely false conception because it has been always customary with the high and the low alike to maintain a record of important events for the benefit of posterity, specially of the events on which the attention of the people is particularly focused. This matter (the challenge of the Qur'ān) had attained the widest possible publicity at that time, and it is impossible that if anything was brought forth against the Qur'ān would not have reached us. But if this is considered possible then it may be possible, too, that there may have been another or several other Prophets advented at that time and divine Scriptures may have

The Nature of Early Non-Believers' Repudiation to the Qur'ān

Despite the severity of their hatred the Prophet continued reciting, and the eavesdroppers continued to increase till they constituted a sizeable portion of Quraish, each of them wary of having his secret exposed.²¹

The Prophet was not asked to argue with his antagonists about Allāh's Oneness because the Qur'ān, clearly not the work of a man, contained within itself the logical proof of the existence and Oneness of Allāh. Yet as his recitations spilled from the stillness of night into the bustle of day and became public, Makkah's anxieties were quickly brought to the boil.

With a popular fair fast approaching, some people from amongst Quraish approached al-Walid bin al-Mughira, a man of some standing. He addressed them, "The time of the fair has come round again and representatives of the Arabs will come to you. They will have heard about this fellow of yours, so agree upon one opinion without dispute so that none will give the lie to the other." They said, "Give us your opinion about him," and he replied, "No, you speak and I will listen." So they said, "He is a *kāhin* (كاهن: clairvoyant)." al-Walid responded, "By God, he is not that, for he has not the unintelligent murmuring and rhymed speech of the *kāhin*." "Then he is possessed." "No, he is not that. We have seen possessed ones, and here there is not choking, no spasmodic movements or whispering." "Then he is poet." "No, he is no poet, for we know poetry in all its forms and meters." "Then he is a sorcerer." "No, we have seen sorcerers and their sorcery, and here there is no spitting and no knots." "Then what are we to say, O' Abū'Abd Shams?" He replied, "By God, his speech is sweet, his root is as a palm-tree whose branches are fruitful, and everything you have said would be known as false. The nearest thing to the truth is your saying that he is a *sāhir* (ساحر: sorcerer), who has brought a message by which he separates a man from his father, or from his brother, or from his wife, or from his family."²²

We find the same phenomenon in the case of Abū Bakr, who built a mosque in Makkah next to his own house and devoted himself to regular prayer and recitation of the Holy Qur'ān. The polytheists approached *Ibn Addaghinna*, who was responsible for protecting Abū Bakr, and asked him to prevent Abū Bakr from reading the Qur'ān because, among other things, women and children were known to eavesdrop on his recitations, and were naturally more susceptible to such an influence.²³

Competitors of the Qur'ān.

Muhammad b. Muslim b. Shihāb az-Zuhrī told me that he was informed that Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb, Abū Jahl b. Hishām, and al-Akhnas b. Sharīq b. ‘Amr b. Wahb ath-Thaqafī (an ally of Banī Zuhra), had ventured out by night to eavesdrop on the Prophet as he recited in his house. Each of the three chose an appropriate place, and none knew the exact whereabouts of his comrades. So they passed the night listening to him. At dawn they dispersed and, meeting one another on the way back, each of them chided his companions, “Do not repeat this again, lest one of the simpletons spots you and becomes suspicious”. Then they left, only to return on the second night, eavesdrop again, and chide each other at dawn. When this recurred on the third night, they confronted each other the next morning and said, “We will not leave until we take a solemn oath never to return”. After this oath they dispersed. A few hours later al-Akhnas took his walking stick and, approaching the house of Abū Sufyān, inquired his opinion as to what they had heard from the Prophet. He replied, “By God, I heard things whose meanings I cannot comprehend, nor what is intended by them”. Al-Akhnas said, “Such is also the case with me”. Then he proceeded to Abū Jahl’s house and asked the same question. He answered, “What, indeed, did I hear! We and the tribe of ‘Abd Manāf have always rivaled each other in honour. They have fed the poor, and so have we: they have assumed other people’s troubles, and so have we; they have shown generosity, and so have we. We have matched each other like two stallions of equal speed. Then they proclaimed, ‘We have prophet who receives revelations from the heavens’. When will we acquire anything like that? By God, we will never believe him or call him truthful.”²⁰

And the Prophet continued reciting while 'Utba listened attentively till he reached a verse that required prostration, and prostrated himself. He then said, "You have heard what you have heard, it is up to you."¹⁷

It has also been recorded that 'Utba while going back to his clans, they started saying "you are coming with a changed mode" He replied his immediate with the following passage:

"انى قد سمعت قولا والله ما سمعت مثله قط، والله ما هو بالشعر، ولا بالسحر، ولا بالكهانة، يا معشر قريش، اطيعونى واجعلوها بى، واخلوا بين هذا الرجل وبين ما هو فيه فاعتزلوه، فوالله ليكونن لقوله الذى سمعت منه نبا عظيم، فان تصبه العرب فقد كفىته بغيركم، وان يظهر على العرب، فملكه ملككم، وعزه عزكم، وكنتم اسعد الناس به"¹⁸

"By God,! I have listened such a glorious discourse that never been listened, surely, this is not poetry, not sorcery and not clairvoyance."

Quraish Boycotts Muhammad (PBUH) and his Clans

Stinging from their failure to tempt Muhammad, the Quraish went to Abū Ṭālib, a highly respected elder who was the Prophet's uncle and tribal protector, and demanded that he put an end to Muhammad's behavior, whom they accused of cursing their gods, denouncing their forefathers and insulting their religion. Abū Ṭālib sent for his nephew and conveyed to him Quraish's message. Anticipating that his uncle had forsaken him and that he was about to lose his support, he replied, "O my uncle, by Allah, if they were to place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left, to force me to abandon this thing, I would not, till Allah let it come forth or I perished therein." And he turned his back and wept. Touched by his words Abū Ṭālib assured him that he would not turn him away. Soon afterwards the sub-clans of Hāshim and al-Muṭṭalib, unwilling to desert one of their own decided against giving up Muhammad even though they were idolaters like the rest of Quraish. Failing to subdue him once again, Quraish wrote a decree stating boycott of the Hāshim and al-Muṭṭalib sub-clans: marriage and all forms of buying and selling, between the rest of Quraish and the two sub-clans was completely suspended, such that not even basic provisions could be secured. This ruthless and devastating embargo carried on for three year, during which the Prophet and his clans suffered immeasurably, carving out a precarious existence with noting to eat but the tough leaves of the sparse desert vegetation.¹⁹ Ibn Ishāq writes:

It was not only that these fiery and powerful poets and orators were incapable of hooding out against the Qur'ān but many of them frankly acknowledged its amazing and magical effect. Imām Hākim and al-Bayhaqī have quoted the following words of Walid bin Mughīrah about the Qur'ān:

والله ان لقوله الذى يقول حلاوة وان عليه لطلاوة — وانه ليعلوا وما يُعلى¹⁵

By God! The words which he speaks are extremely sweet and elegant. This speech shall overwhelm and cannot be suppressed.

Great Temptations to Muhammad (PBUH)

'Utba bin Rabī'a, a chieftain, observed the Prophet praying in the Holy Sanctuary alone and informed the Quraishi assembly, "I will go to Muhammad with some proposals which he might accept. We will offer him whatever he seeks, and then he will leave us in peace." So 'Utba went to the Prophet and said, "O my nephew, you are one of us, of the noblest of the tribe and of admirable ancestry. You have come to your people with a great matter that has divided their society and mocked their way of life, have insulted their gods and their religion, and stated that their forefathers were disbelievers, so pay attention to me and I will make you offers, and perhaps you will consent to one of them." The Prophet approved, and 'Utba continued, "O my nephew, if you seek - with what you have brought-money, we will gather from our wealth so that you well be the richest among us; if you seek honour, we well make you our leader so that no decision can be made without you; if you wish sovereignty, we will make you king; and if this thing that comes to you is a bad spirit that you can see but cannot get rid of, we will find you a physician, and will use our riches in having you cured, for often a spirit possesses a man till he can be cured of it." Having listened patiently, the Prophet then replied, "Now listen to me:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ حَمْدٌ تَنْزِيلٌ مِنَ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

كُنْتُ فُضِّلْتُ بِأَيْتِهِ، قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ بِشِيرًا وَتَذِيرًا

فَأَعْرَضَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا فِي أَكِنَّةٍ مِمَّا

تَدْعُونَا إِلَيْهِ وَفِي آذَانِنَا وَقْرٌ وَمِنْ بَيْنِنَا وَبَيْنِكَ حِجَابٌ فَأَعْمَلْنَا إِنَّا

عَمِلُونَ -¹⁶

before them and declared it to be the word of Allāh. The challenge to all the Arabs has been proclaimed in the following verse:

قُلْ لِّئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا
الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا¹²

Such a proclamation was no ordinary thing. It came from a person who had never learned anything from the renowned poets and scholars of the time. This proclamation was therefore the greatest challenge to their literary prowess, as also a fatal blow to their creed and beliefs. This was also a call for combat against their national honour and personal prides that the haughty Arabs could never let go unchallenged. A hush fell over the whole galaxy of these stirring orators and fiery poets. Not a single soul stepped forward to accept this challenge. After sometimes the Qur'an proclaimed once again:

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ
وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ فَإِنْ لَمْ
تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ
أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ¹³

Their silence remained unbroken as before. None of them was able to compose even a few sentences to match the Qur'anic verses. Just think that they were a people who according to 'Allamah Jurjāni,¹⁴ could never resist ridiculing the idea in their poetry if they heard that there was someone at the other end of the globe who prided himself in his eloquence and rhetorical speech. It is unthinkable that they could keep quiet even after such repeated challenges and dare not come forward. There can be no other explanation of this except that these stalwarts of eloquence and rhetoric were helpless in meeting the challenge of Qur'an. They had left no stone unturned for persecuting the Prophet (PBUH). They tortured him, called him insane, sorcerer, poet and sooth-sayer, but failed utterly in composing even a few sentences like the Qur'anic verses.

The enemies of Qur'ān accused Holy Prophet to deduce the Qur'ānic material from a Ajmi *Rāhib*, named this material *Wabi* and converted it into colloquial Arabic language. Allah has mentioned:

وَلَقَدْ تَعَلَّمُ أَنْهَرَ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي
يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ¹⁰

In responding to these objections, Qur'ān says:

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَيْنَاهُ قُلْ إِنِ افْتَرَيْتُهُ فَلَا تَمْلِكُونَ لِي مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا¹¹

Keeping in view the above mentioned verses, the approach of Orientalists becomes obvious in refusing the heavenly status of Qur'ān and declared it human discourse. This is the fundamental thinking which later on Orientalists adopted indirectly. Consequently, they focused attention on the topics like Qur'anic text, multiple readings, *suras* order, linguistic variations and the codices of *Sahaba*. In dealing with these subjects, western scholars based their research on weak reports and traditions and established number of doubts on it.

In the present age, Orientalistic objections are looked to be based upon some renovations to these pagan's thoughts and try to present the Qur'anic text as a distorted and unpreserved document. However, it is irrefutable fact that in comparison to the old objections, recent Orientalistic methodology has been more developed in highlighting the new epistemological conflict. This modern methodology also looks impartial apparently. In this connection, we may easily conclude that although ancient Jews and Christians are undoubtedly predecessors for third *Hijra* century Orientalists, but in introducing new aspects to criticize the text of the Qur'an, later western scholars progressed more rapidly. Similarly, the approach of middle and modern ages' Orientalists looks better organized and contains enough intellectual capacity.

The Impact of Qur'ān on Enemies

Eloquence and rhetoric were the life blood of Arabs and they used to claim their superiority among all the civilizations. They were proud of their poetic and prose skills at the level that they considered all others as *Ajam* which means dumb. In this eloquent society their appeared on the score an unlettered personality named Muhammad (SWS) who presented an oration