

*Dr. Rashid Ahmad Khan\**

## The Holy Quran : Its Legislative Functions

The Primary source of laws in the Islamic system is the Holy Quran. The Holy Quran says :

انا انزلنا اليك الكتاب بالحق لتحكم بين الناس بما اراك الله

(105 : 4)

(Lo ! We reveal unto thee the Scripture with the truth, that you mayst judge between mankind by that which Allah showeth thee).

The Holy Quran was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) during a period of twenty three years. Mr. Sobhi Mahmassani writes : "The verses of the Quran were revealed intermittently to meet the requirements of events in the Islamic Society ; therefore, these events were called the causes of revelation. The Meccan verses are mostly short and concise and deal with matters relating to religion, religious observance and God's unity, whereas the Medinese verses are long and embody most of the detailed Islamic Legislation—Legislation in the Quran was revealed gradually in conformity with the causes of the revelation and the preparedness of the Arabs to discard their old customs and to substitute for them the new rulings which may be seen in the question of prohibiting liquors and gambling".<sup>1</sup>

The Quran is the first source of law in point of time and efficacy. In the Islamic Law the term 'Lawgiver' refers to God Who is the source and inspiration of all the 'Islamic Legislation. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) is the conveyer and the interpreter of the Divine Will to the Muslims.

Absence of inconvenience is the main characteristic of the Quranic Legislation. It aims at removing the hardships. God praises the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) in the following words :

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\*Assistant Professor, Law College, Punjab University, Lahore.

1- Falsafat Al-Tashri Fi Al-Islam, pp. 66-67.

lectual<sup>120</sup> miracle, uniqueness of which is admitted both by the friends and the foes.<sup>121</sup>

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

120. Cf. Ghazali :

”ثم لا يتمارى في تواتر القرآن وهى معجزة الكبرى الباقية بين الخلق و ليس  
لنبي معجزة باقية سواه.“

”So there should be no doubt that the Holy Quran has been continuously, related by successive witnesses and this is the very greatest miracle which is still existing among the people : while there is no single miracle, other than this, which exists for any other prophet.”

(*Ihya*, Egypt, 1939, vol. 2, p. 388 ; and Nasfi, *Umda*, p. 17.)

Cf. also Syed Ahmad Saqr :

”ايداه بمعجزات حسية كمعجزات من سبقه من المرسلين و خصه بمعجزة عقلية خالدة  
وهى انزال القرآن الكريم الذى لو اجتمعت الانس و الجن على ان يا توا بمثلته  
لم يستطيعوا.“

”Lord Almighty has aided him with perceptible miracles like those given to earlier prophets and also with an intellectual and existing miracle—the revelation of the Holy Qur’an, that if all the men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of the Quran they could not bring the like of it.”

(Introduction, *Ijaz al-Qur’an* by Baqillani, Cf. also Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi : “Intellectual miracle is greater than the perceptible miracles !” (*Hujjatul-Islam*, 1359 A.H., p. 31).

[21. Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, Lahore, 1950, p. 245.

turth of his teachings and never the miracle alone.<sup>115</sup>

3. The prophet is never desirous to show miracles. The Holy Prophet is advised by God to refuse to perform miracles, when demanded by such disbelievers.<sup>116</sup>
4. The word 'ayat' (sign) includes both kinds of miracles perceptible to senses and intellectual.<sup>117</sup>
5. The basic characteristic of Qur'anic concept of miracles is that the prophet, by performing miracles does not become Divine as believed in Christianity naming Jesus "God the son" and adopting quite irrational beliefs of trinity, Incarnation and Atonement. But the prophet remains a man of esteemed character and a servant of God."<sup>118</sup> The miracle is not a purpose in itself. But according to Ibn Rushd it is rather an evidence and a support to make men believe the truth.<sup>119</sup>
6. The Holy Qur'an, itself is an outstanding evidential intel-

115. Cf. Ghazali who lays stress on this idea :

فمن ذلك الطريق فاطلب اليقين بالنبوة لا من قلب العصاء ثعبانا و شق القمر.

("So this is the right way to your faith in prophethood strengthened and not to get it from becoming the rod a serpent or rendering the moon asunder.")

(*Al-Munqidh min al-dalal*).

116. *Al-Qur'an* : 17 : 90-93, 15 : 7-15, Cf. Ibn Hisham, *Al-Sirat al-Nabawiyya*, Egypt, 1936, Vol. II, p. 317.

117. Cf. Razi, Who has enumerated in detail both kinds of miracles of the Holy Prophet P.B.U.H. (*Kitab al-Arbain*, p. 309-316).

118. *Al-Qur'an*, 21 : 26 ; Cf. *Ency. of Religion and religions* by E.R. Pike, art. "VISHNU".

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

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

(*Kitab al-Kashf*, Egypt, 1319, p. 79).

"You should understand the issue of miracles now they become signs for the prophets. I mean that the miracles pertaining to revealed knowledge and action are absolute arguments for the quality of prophethood and so far the other miracles are concerned which pertain to deeds, they are evidences and support."

6. The purpose of such miracle is a warning to rejecters.

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

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

1. Miracle is not a part of prophethood,<sup>109</sup> as is considered in Christianity,<sup>110</sup> central doctrine of which is itself based on an alleged miracle. The Holy Qur'an says :

”وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِآيَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ“<sup>111</sup>

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

Jesus, referring his miracles mentions twice that he performs them only with the permission of God.<sup>112</sup> The Holy Prophet regards it the blessings from God (البركة من الله). Razi says :  
”ان المعجزات لما عجز الخلق عنها كان ذلك فعلاً من افعال الله تعالى“<sup>113</sup>

2. The real miracle of a prophet is his high resplendent and unblemished character. The Holy Qur'an mentions it as evidenee,<sup>114</sup> so the criterion of belief in prophethood is the

108. Ibid., 21:107.

109. Cf. Sheikh Ahmad Sirhandi, *Maktoobat*, Cf., also Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi : "Miracle is a fruit of prophethood and not the base of the same", (*Hujjut-ul-Islam*, Deoband, 1359, p. 31).

110. Cf. Muhammad Ali, *Religion of Islam*, Lahore, 1936, p. 241.

111. Al-Qur'an 40 : 78.

112. Ibid., 3 : 49.

113. *Kitab al-Arabin*, Hyderabad, Deccan, 1353 A.H., p. 316.

114. *Al-Qur'an*, 10 : 16, Cf. Ibn Maskawaih, differentiating between a prophet and non-prophet, he says :

”اما النبي المرسل فانه يتميز عن الناس بخصال كثيرة احدها ان للمرسل ما لا يجتمع الا فيه و يتميز بها عن غيره ولا تكون مجتمعة في سواه“

“The messenger of Allah and the prophet is distinguished from other men by his numerous fine qualities ; one of them is that the messenger of Allah has such qualities which do not come together but in him and he is distinguished from others by them and they do not combine in any one else.)

(*Al-Fauzal-Asghar*, Egypt, 1325, p. 104).

1. The prophets are rejected by the mass of people,<sup>103</sup>
2. Their rejection is regarded the denial of Divine communications.<sup>104</sup>
3. The prophets, being the sincere servants of God carry on their mission with firmness and constancy.<sup>105</sup>
4. At last the stage is set when Divine help comes and miracles like ark of Noah, She-camel of Salih, rod of Moses on sea, appear, and the cruel rejecters, after a considerable intermission, are smashed and become a lesson for the coming generation.<sup>106</sup>

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

”وما نرسل بالآيات الا تخويفا“<sup>107</sup>

The Orientalists and even some Muslim rationalists have concluded from the first part of this verse that miracles were stopped and not sent on the Holy Prophet :

”وما منعنا ان نرسل بالآيات الا ان كذبوا بها الاولون الخ . . .“

(And nothing hindered Us that we should send signs except that the ancients rejected them and We gave to Thamood she-camel manifest sign, but on her account they did injustice and we do not send signs but to make men fear)

It is obvious that in the light of this verse the objection is quite baseless:

1. The ancients did not take a lesson from the miracles.
2. It was advisable that God may not send further signs.
3. He gave to thamood a she-camel, manifest sign.
4. But on her account most of them did injustice.
5. As a result of this, Divine help came to the Prophet Salih and his believers.

103. Al-Qur'an, 7:64; 7:72; 6:33.

104. Ibid., 6:33.

105. Ibid., 6:34.

106. Ibid., 3:137.

107. Ibid., 17:59.

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

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

"لن نوثرك على ما جاءنا من البينت و الذى فطرنا فاقض ما انت قاض ائما  
تقضى هذه الحيوۃ الدنيا - انا ائما بربنا ليغفرلنا خطيئنا"<sup>101</sup>

(We do not prefer you to what has come to us of clear arguments and to Him who made us, therefore decide what you are going to decide; you can only decide about this world's life. Surely we believe in our Lord that He may forgive us our sins).

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

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

100. *Al-Qur'an*, 20:70.

101. *Ibid.*, 20:72-73.

102. *Jami Tirmzi*, Delhi, Vol. II. p. 151.

The second important purpose of miracle is to strengthen the belief of the believers. In ordinary circumstances, when there is no clash and conflict with enemies, such miracles appear from the prophets as a testimony to their prophethood. Making mountains and birds declaring glory of God, subservient to David,<sup>91</sup> making the wind blowing violent and the devils subservient to Solomon,<sup>92</sup> making clouds to give shade and sending 'manna and quails' on Israelites,<sup>93</sup> flowing of twelve springs from mountains by the rod of Moses,<sup>94</sup> healing the blind and the leprous, bringing the dead to life and other miracles performed by Jesus,<sup>95</sup> assistance of angels,<sup>96</sup> and innumerable miracles performed by the Holy Prophet<sup>97</sup> (P.B.U.H.), belong to this category. To tranquilize the heart of the believers, to intensify the faith is the basic motive of this kind of miracles. The Holy Qur'an illuminates this motive itself :

”و ما جعله الله الابشرى ولتطمئن به قلوبكم“<sup>98</sup>

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

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

”و عن عبدالله ابن مسعود قال كنا نعد الايات بركة و اتم تعدونها تخويفاً - كنا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في سفر فقل الماء فقال اطلبوا فضلة من ماء فجاءوا باناء فيه ماء قليل فادخل يده في الاناء ثم قال حي على الطهور المبارك و البركة من الله و لقد رأيت الماء ينبع من بين اصابع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم و لقد كنا نسمع تسبيح الطعام و هو يوكل - رواه البخارى“<sup>99</sup>

(“Hazrat Abdullah b. Masud said: We used to reckon the signs as

91. Ibid., 21:79.

92. Ibid., 21:81-82.

93. Ibid., 2:57.

94. Ibid., 2:60.

95. Ibid., 3:49.

96. Ibid., 3:123-125.

97. *Mishkat, Kitab al-Mudjizat.*

98. *Al-Qur'an*, 8:10.

99. *Mishkat, Kitab al-Mudjizat.*

”لو لم تكن فيه آيات بينة - لكان منظره ينبيك بالخبر“<sup>84</sup>.

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

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

”بل كانت شائئله واحواله ، شواهد قاطعة بصدقه“<sup>85</sup>

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

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

”ان يك ما تقول فيه حقاً فانه نبي“<sup>86</sup>.

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

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

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

84. Yousuf Ismail al-Nabhani: *Jawahir al-Bihar*, vol. I, p. 55.

85. *Ihya*, vol. 2, p. 384.

86. Qustalani: *Jawahir al-Bukhari*, Egypt, 1940, p. 4.

87. *Al-Qur'an* 2:259.

88. *Al-Qur'an*, 2:260.

89. *Ibid.*, 28:30.32.

90. *Ibid.*, 17.1.