

Episode 28

Is The Quran From God + Evidences of Inspiration

Mohamed: *Dear viewers, we welcome you to a new episode of our program, "Questions About Faith". And it is our pleasure again to welcome Father Zakaria Botros. You are most welcome.*

F Zakaria: Thank you

Mohamed: *In the previous episode we talked about the concept of revelation in Christianity and in Islam. In this episode, we will talk about the evidence of revelation both in Christianity and in Islam. Dear Father, we have received many questions and we will start with one of them. Is there convincing proof of the authenticity of inspiration in Islam? And what do Islamic reference books say about that?*

F Zakaria: Definitely. This is an important question: proof of the inspiration, because the matter definitely requires evidence to prove if these are God's words or not. As to Christianity, the evidence of the authenticity of the Bible - Let me tell you a story. One time, a king asked one of his ministers who was a Christian, a believer, who lived for God. The king asked him, "What proof can you give me to prove the authenticity of this Book?" The minister said, "I have two proofs. The first one is me." The king asked, "How? What do you mean by 'me'? You are an evidence of the authenticity of the Bible?" The minister said, "Yes. You know how I lived in the past, how evil and immoral I was. You know about

that very well, and you know now how I have been transformed, how I have been changed. It is the Bible that transformed me, from a fierce wolf into a gentle lamb. I'm telling you that I am proof enough, because you know me and you know my life. You know that no ordinary man could change me." And we read about many people in the Bible who experienced such a transformation. Saul the terrorist was converted into Paul the evangelist. Augustine, who was lewd and immoral became Saint Augustine and so on. The most powerful proof that the Bible is a Book from God is that it has the power to transform man's life. I was blind but now I see. "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, old things have passed away, behold all things have become new." The king asked him, "O.K., give me the second evidence." He said, "The second evidence is, the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Bible." The Old Testament prophesied about the person of Christ, where He would be born, where He would grow up, how He would enter Jerusalem, and everything that happened to Him. All this has been given in such accurate prophecies: "But you Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah, for out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

Mohamed: Where are these prophecies mentioned?

F Zakaria: In The Old Testament.

Mohamed: O.K., in The Old Testament. Yes.

F Zakaria: All of them were fulfilled in the person of Christ, and so many others. And there are other

prophecies as well that had been fulfilled in The New Testament. The Bible foretold about future events, and they did happen.

Mohamed: Yes. And what do you mean by “The New Testament?”

F Zakaria: The New Testament means the Gospels, the epistles of Paul the apostle, and so forth, which is known as the Gospel (The Injeel). But I also wanted to look into the evidence of revelation in Islam. As a matter of fact, I could not find people to ask. Whenever I asked someone he would tell me, “Why do you ask?” So I'm forced to refer to reference books again. The chief biographer of Mohamed, the major one among the authors of Mohamed's biography, who is Ibn Hesham; I found two proofs that he cites. One of them is cited as Khadiga's test of the evidence of revelation. You can find this book on the Internet, by Ibn Hesham.

Mohamed: Any specific website?

F Zakaria: Islam.

Mohamed: Islam.com.

F Zakaria: The book says, Ibn Ishak said this is in volume one page 230. Ibn Ishak said, "and Ismaeel Ibn Aby Hakeem told me, a slave of the house of Zobair, that he narrated on the strings of Khadiga, may God be pleased with her, that she said to the messenger of God, may God's prayer and peace be upon him, “O cousin, can you tell me about this friend of yours who comes to you,

whenever he comes?" Yes, he answered. She said, "When he comes to you, tell me about it." Then Gabriel came to him as he used to do. So the messenger of God said to Khadiga, "O Khadiga, this is Gabriel, he has come to me." She said "Rise up, my cousin, and sit on my left thigh." So the messenger of God rose up and sat on it. She asked, "Do you see him? He said yes. She told him, "O.K., Turn and sit on my right thigh." So the messenger of God turned and sat on her right thigh. Then she asked him, "Do you still see him?" He said, "Yes, I do". She said, "O.K., turn and sit in my lap." So the messenger of God turned and sat in her lap. "Do you still see him?" She asked. "Yes", he answered. So she removed her veil and threw away her covering as the messenger of God was still seated in her lap. Then she asked him, "Do you still see him?" He said no. "O cousin," she said, "Be steadfast and rejoice, for by God I tell you this is an angel, not a demon." Ibn Ishak also goes on to say. " And she also told this tradition to Abd Allah Ibn Hassan and he said, "I heard my mother Fatema Bent Hussain narrating this tradition on the strings of Khadiga, yet I heard her say that Khadiga let the messenger of God slip in between her and her clothes, and at that point Gabriel went away. So she said to the messenger of God this is surely an angel not a demon." This is the evidence cited by Ibn Hesham in the biography of Mohamed, as reported by Ibn Ishak. This book, "Al Sira Al Nabawia", has been verified by Mostafa Al Sakka and Ibraheem Al Ibiary and Abd Al Hafeez Shalaby, was printed in Dar Al Ma'aref, in Beirut Lebanon, in the year 2001. Sheik Khalel Abd Al Kereem has written about this anecdote in his book, "Al Nass Al Mo'asses" or "The foundational text."

Mohamed: You mean the anecdote you have mentioned?

F Zakaria: Yes. He used this, and he used other reference books. I was just citing the place where I found it. Then I got to read this book, “Al Nass Al Mo’asses”, by Sheik Khaleel Abd Al Kereem and I found this written in his book. The book again is called, “Al Nass Al Mo’asses”, volume I, pages 63 and 64. He says, “Mohamed said, O Khadiga” (this is Gabriel, the same story), she said to him, “O cousin, come and sit on my left thigh”, so he sat. She asked him, “Do you still see him?” He said, “yes”... till the end of the story. Then she says to him at the end, "O, by God this is an angel, not a demon." And he listed the references. “Tareekh Al Islam” by AL Thahaby, page 60. “Al Khasa’es Al Kobra” by Al Siouty, pages 218 and 219. “Al Sira Al Halabiya”, by Al Halaby, volume I page 386. “Al Sira Al Nabawia”, by Ibn Hesham, the one we cited. Also, “Tareekh Al Tabary”, volume 2 page 298, and “Al Sira Al Nabawia”, by Ibn Katheer, “Al Sira Al Shamiya”, volume 2 page 314, and “Hayat Mohamed”, the life of Mohamed, by Haykal page 152, and “Mohamed Rasool Allah”, the messenger of God, by Nasser Al Deen, page 105. And the Comments “Hawamesh Al Shaikh Abd AL Haleem Mahmoud”, and his son Mohamed, and “Al Rasool In Ramadan” by AL Kharbotly page 31, and “Mohamed”, by Tawfeek Al Hakeem, page 24. All these are proofs. Some people tell us, “but this is a single tradition. There was no consensus among the Islamic nation,” or “no no, this is a fabricated tradition, it is an Israeli tradition”. But I'm citing all these big reference

books in order to show that there is a huge question mark. What I would like you to pay attention to is, what evidence or proof is used in this story to establish the fact that this is an angel, not a demon?

Mohamed: I, myself, find these things really depressing.

F Zakaria: I'm just showing you a comparison. You asked me about the evidence in Christianity, I told you, changing lives and the fulfillment of prophecies. But the only evidence cited in all Islamic reference books regarding inspiration, is this one here.

Mohamed: As far as you know, are there no other evidences?

F Zakaria: Let me add something. Yunes, on the strings of Ibn Ishak said, "Abd Allah Ibn Al Hassan Ibn Aly Ibn Aby Taleb narrated, " I heard Fatema, the daughter of Hussain, who is his mother, narrating this tradition on the strings of Khadiga. Yet I heard her say, that she slipped the messenger of God between her body and her clothes (that is, under her shirt), which made Gabriel go away." This is written in Al Sira Al Nabawiya, the prophetic biography by Ibn Ishak. Here is another continuation of the same strange anecdote. I'm still quoting from the book of Sheik Khaleel Abd Al Kereem. These are not my own words; I don't have the right to speak my own. These are all Islamic reference books. Sheik Khaleel Abd Al Kereem used to be a lawyer in religious courts. Till the day he died, he still wore his turban and his caftan. Let's see what he says here: "And another completion of

this amazing anecdote is that the test of the person coming to Mohamed, who was called “your friend”, by the purified lady in order to know if he were an angel or a demon. This test was carried out by the guidance of Waraka Ibn Nawfal. He quoted “Al Sira Al Halabiya”, volume 1 page 406. Sheik Khaleel Abd Al Kereem comments: " Yet Waraka Ibn Nawfal commanded her only to remove her veil, but to make the great one, this is Mohamed, sit on her thighs then in her lap, then to slip him in under her shirt this was something of her own making and devise". Khaleel Abd Al Kereem asks: “And why is that?” He himself answers this question, saying: “This can be attributed to her motherly affection, which became overwhelming toward the prophet, even after he was 43 years old. This is as far as she is concerned, but as far as the submissive party is concerned, no doubt that the reader cannot miss the fact that he had become exemplary in the field of obedience and modification. She says sit on my thigh, and he sits, come on my lap, and he comes. Slip in between my undershirt and my body, and he comes in.” He goes on to say, “actually it is a very peculiar anecdote.” Have you heard this story yourself before?

Mohamed: I have never heard it before.

F Zakaria: And I believe that the viewers haven't heard it either. It is a very nice story. Let me keep going. Let me continue with what Khaleel Abd Al Kereem said. He says, “This points out something to whoever has even one iota of intelligence, that the submissive party started to look at his wife the way a son sees or looks at his beloved mother, who sees his own happiness in keeping

her pleased and satisfied, and that whatever she commands must be immediately done, because the affectionate loving mother will only tell him what is good for him and beneficial, even if he himself doesn't know the identity of the command or the motive behind the whole request.” He continues in this line, saying, “Here we find a rare example, an extremely rare example of devotion to the beloved, or rather obliteration of oneself in the beloved one. This even reminds us of the common saying, “Two bodies in one spirit.” He goes on to say, “But we ask: Is this an indwelling or an obliteration of self or is it complete unity?” He concludes saying, “Choose whatever you like. But it is self evident that this image is less common than red sulphur, as said of the love of the husband- son, or son husband to the wife - mother or mother- wife.” As a matter of fact all these things require rethinking or rephrasing, because the mentality of the 21st century is totally different from the mentality of the first century after Hegra. What is the proof of this inspiration? Is that proof? What evidence does it establish? One should think and understand. These books must be rephrased and analyzed, not to fabricate something new. But they have to explain why this happened and that happened and they have to come up with convincing conclusions so that the mind can be convinced.

Mohamed: Another question.

F Zakaria: Go ahead.

Mohamed: Can't Satan interfere in the process of inspiration?

F Zakaria: Well, can't the devil interfere in the process of inspiration? A reasonable question. A very reasonable question. Actually, I remember what had been written in the book *Asbab Al Nozool*, about the reasons of revelation in the Quran. The comment on Surah Al Najm 53, verses 19 and 20, reads: "Have you all considered Allat and Al U'zza and Manat the other who ranks in third place?" These were all idols that were worshiped, three idols; Allat and Al U'zza and Manat. Mohamed inserted words here that Al Imam El Nassafy and Al Jalalyen said the following about: El Nassafy said: He, may peace be upon him, was in an assembly of his people, that is, in their council, and was reciting the Surah that says: "By the star as it sets, your companion has neither strayed or is he misguided," until he reached the part that says: "Have you all considered Allat and Al U'zza and Manat the other who ranks in third place," his tongue was carried away. Who says that? That's El Nassafy himself in his book *Asbab El Nozool*. He said that his tongue was carried away, and said, "These supreme semi-gods, their intercession is surely to be sought after." Nassafy continues to say, "and it was reported that Gabriel, may peace be upon him, drew his attention to it, so he went and told them that this was from the devil." This is from the commentary of El Nassafy, volume 3 page 161. So, as an answer to your question: can Satan interfere? Well, yes, obviously.

Mohamed: *But we know that when Islam emerged, it put an end to all those idols.*

F Z: Those worshipped idols.

Mohamed: Yes, and banned those gods and goddesses, taking the form of idols.

F Zakaria: But, as it says here, Satan came, according to Al Nassafy, and inserted or cast among his words, these words, in order to please the people of Quraish. And when the people of Quraish heard that, all of them knelt down and worshiped together with Mohamed, and they said, "The prophet professes our gods". They even sent word to the people who migrated to Ethiopia, and told them, "Now we are reconciled to the people of Quraish." So the immigrants returned. Also in the commentary of the Al Galalyn, about this occasion when the prophet, may God's peace and prayer be upon him, started to recite Surah Al Najm in a Qorashite council, right after the words: "Have you all considered Allat and Al U'zza and Manat the third one." Satan cast down, in his words, things that he was not aware of. And this is what he cast down: "those supreme semi-gods whose intercession is truly to be sought after." The word in Arabic means: "extremely beautiful semi-goddesses," or highly esteemable. And they rejoiced at the news. Later Gabriel told him about the words that Satan inserted or recited through him. So Mohamed was grieved. And he was comforted by these verses. Namely, he found solace in these verses. Imam Abu Ga'afar Al Nahass, in his comment on this incident of the semi-goddesses says, "Satan cast this down into the recitation of the messenger, may God's peace and prayer be upon him." This is in his book, "The Abrogating and the Abrogated in the Holy Quran", page 225. These are questions that occur to the mind of someone who thinks. How can

Satan utter words through the tongue of the messenger? How can Satan compile a verse that sounds so similar to the Quranic verses, to the point that Mohamed himself could not tell that it weren't a Quranic verse?

Mohamed: No doubt, anyone in his right mind would utterly reject such things.

F Zakaria: And guess what? This happened at the time when Allah the God of the Quran, challenged people to come up with verses similar to the verses of the Quran, as in Surah 2 Al Baqara verse 23: "If you are in any doubt about what we have sent down to our servant, then bring in a chapter like it." But here we find Satan bringing a chapter like it. It was so similar that the prophet could not tell the difference between it and Gabriel's speech. You read this in the commentary of Al Nassafy, volume I page 68. Do you see my point? **Yes.** And in Surah 10 Yunes, verse 38 it reads: "Or do they say he has made it up, say: produce a chapter like it." O.K. Satan has brought something similar to it. Isn't this strange? It sounds very odd. This is not easy. Again, in Surah 11 Hood, verse 13 it reads also: "Or do they say he has made it all up, say: well then, bring ten chapters made up like it." Imam Al Nassafy comments on this by saying, "Assume I have made this up myself, why don't you also make up words yourselves similar to what I have said?" But what about the bit about the semi-goddesses? Wasn't that made up? And it even passed unnoticed. No one could tell the difference. Again, in Surah 17 Al Esraa', verse 88, we read: "Say, even if men and demons organized to produce something like this Quran they would never bring anything like it." Nassafy

explains this, saying: “If they assisted one another to make up something similar to the Quran in its eloquence and its beautiful order and compilation, they still would not be able to make up something similar to it.” So after this much of a challenge, the messenger would not be able to discern between the discourse of Satan and that of Gabriel.

Mohamed: But those insertions that you have mentioned are not in the Quran circulated today. Or are they?

F Zakaria: Well, they were, but they are part of that which was abrogated.

Mohamed: And they are not there any longer.

F Zakaria: Well, didn't Gabriel tell him? Didn't he tell him that this was not from God, and that it was from Satan? And then God erases the words of Satan. Well, you asked me a question. Is it possible? And I say it is. But it is not so in Christianity. We have no such thing. This issue about the semi goddesses... One time in the Paltalk, in the chat room... We have chatting rooms to discuss such matters.

Mohamed: But some people say that Satan came to tempt Christ and tried to seduce him. What do you have to say about that?

F Zakaria: I say that Christ defeated Satan, and never surrendered to him. He did not accept or receive his words. Satan fights. The Bible says that your adversary

the devil, walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

Mohamed: Like a roaring lion.

F Zakaria: Right. But Christ, by the power of His divinity, was able to defeat him, and never gave in to him. The problem here is giving in to Satan, so they say something else. They say, “This tradition is fabricated, It’s an Israeli fabrication”, or it is by a single narrator, it was not according to the consensus of the whole nation. But it has been mentioned by Al Nassafy and Al Galalayn and the commentators, and in “Asbab Al Nozool” by Al Wahedy, and “The Abrogating And The Abrogated In The Quran”, by Ibn Salama and “Nasb Al Majaneek” by Shaikh Al Albany and also in the book by Abu Ga’afar Al Nahass which is entitled “The Abrogating and the Abrogated”.

Mohamed: In the following few minutes, let me ask: Can mortal beings interfere and insert things in the revealed books?

F Zakaria: Mortal men? Oh, yes. You remind me of something very strange. In the Quran, Al Siouty says in his book “Al Etqan Fi Ulom Al Quran”, pages 53 and 54. He says something very strange, very, very strange. Hear what it says: He says here, “God put the truth on the tongue of Omar, messenger, prophet and on his heart.” Ibn Omar said, “Nothing has been revealed down to people”, and he said, “and God revealed the Quran in the same fashion as Omar uttered.” And Ibn Mardaweh cites on the strings of Mogahed, “Whenever Omar formulated

an opinion, it would be revealed later in the Quran.” Omar Ibn Al Khatab. And Al Bokhary cited, as well as others on the strings of Anas, “Omar said, I corresponded with my Lord in 3 things. I said, O messenger of God, why don't we adopt Abraham's shrine as a place for prayer? (And all of a sudden the verse was revealed: **“Adopt Abraham's shrine as a place for prayer.”** And I said, “O messenger of God, both decent and indecent men come in to your wives, why don't you command them to hide behind a veil?” And lo and behold, the verse about the veil was revealed. And again, when I said to him, “If you divorce them, the verse of the threat of divorce was revealed. And there is a fourth one, concerning the prisoners of war taken at Badr. I'm still citing Al Siouty. Concerning the prisoners of war taken at Badr. This is very important. Very important. What does he say here? The wives of the messenger, may God's peace and prayer be upon him, gathered against him in jealousy, and I said to them, that's Omar talking, “Perhaps should he divorce you, his Lord would grant him even better wives than you instead”. And the verse was revealed after the same fashion. Omar says something, and the verse would be revealed verbatim as he said it. Muslim cites, on the strings of Ibn Omar, that he said, “I corresponded to my Lord in three things.” This is another citation. Here he says on the issue of the veil and the prisoners of war at Badr, and Abraham's shrine. And Ibn Abi Hatem cited Anas, saying: “Omar said, I corresponded to my Lord and my Lord corresponded to me on four issues.” When this verse came down: “We created man from an extract of clay.” When the verse came down, I said, “Blessed be God, the best of creators,” and it was so revealed. Blessed be

God, the best of creators. And he also cites Abd Al Rahman Ibn Abi Laila, that a Jew met Omar Ibn Al Khatab and said to him, “This Gabriel, that your friend is talking about, is our enemy.” Namely, that Gabriel, whom Mohamed talks about, is an enemy to the Jews. Omar said, “Who is an enemy of God and his angels and his messengers, as well as of Gabriel and Michael, anyhow God is an enemy of disbelievers.” This is what Omar said. He goes on to say, “and the verse was revealed exactly as Omar said it.” and so on. There is something else as well. This is talking about the incident of the calumny, regarding Aisha. Saad Ibn Ma’az said, “Praise be to You, this is a great lie.” And the verse was revealed verbatim. There were 2 men, friends of Mohamed; Zaid Ibn Haretha and Abu Ayoub, who also said this: Praise be to You, this is a great lie.” And the verse was revealed verbatim.

Mohamed: We are running out of time, and this is enough for now. Thank you very much. Dear viewers, I can only say, when confronted by these issues that demand surprise and amazement, I haven't heard such things before. But let me read to you a verse from the Gospel according to Matthew chapter 12, verse 19. Talking about Christ. It says, “He will not quarrel, nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break. And smoking flax He will not quench”. Please lift up your heart with me to God. Thank you, our dear guests, and our dear viewers. On the screen, you will see the Internet website addresses to which you can send your questions, and we welcome all of your questions.

If you want to receive the Bible, we will be happy to send you a free copy. Thanks, everybody. Till we meet again.

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