

Introduction: The Inimitable Linguistic Miracle of the Noble Quran

It is the Sunnah of Allah (swt) that Miracles Establish the Truth of the Messages

So we see that in the age of mastery in illusion, Allah (swt) supported Musa (as) with miracles, that even the leading illusionists could not match. Thus, the most skilled in illusion fell into prostration, proclaiming belief in the Deen of Musa (as). Similarly, in the age of mastery in medicine, Esa (as) was supported with miracles regarding death, disease and medicine. It was a challenge that the expert physicians of Bani Israel could not match and so the masses had confirmation of his (as) Message.

As for the Final Prophet (as), the Messenger of Allah (saw), our Master Muhammad (saw), he was sent to a people who had mastery in the Arabic language. In addition to other miracles that are mentioned in the Noble Quran and the authenticated ahadith, the Messenger (saw) was sent with the Miracle of the Noble Quran, which was inimitable by man. Unlike the other miracles, the Noble Quran alone was the challenge (تحدي) that was laid down to authenticate the Message of the Prophet Muhammad (saw).

The linguistic miracle of the Noble Quran was appropriate for the society in which it was revealed. Imam Al-Baqillani elaborated the prowess of the Arabs in linguistic skills, accompanied by incapability when faced with the challenge of the Noble Quran, stating, **وكان ذلك في زمان سما فيه شأن** **البيان، وجلت مكانته في صدور أهلهم، وعرفوا باللسن والفصاحة، وقوة العارضة في الاعراب عن خوالج النفوس، والابانة عن مشاعر**

القلوب. وظل رسول الله صلوات الله عليه، يتحداهم بما كانوا يعتقدون في أنفسهم القدرة عليه، والتمكن منه، ولم يزل يقرعهم ويعجزهم، ويكشف عن نقصهم، حتى استكانوا وذلو. "This was in a time when the matter of expression was elevated and its status resounded in the hearts of its people. They were known for their language and eloquence, as well as the strength of expression of the sentiments of the souls and evocation of the feelings within hearts. The Messenger of Allah (saw) continuously challenged the Arabs, within what they believed themselves to be capable in, and were in command of. And he (saw) continued to confound them, rendering them incapable and exposing their deficiency, until they were humiliated and brought low." Indeed, the Arabs were so consumed with mastery of the Arabic language, that they mastered little of anything else.

It is the Wisdom (Hikmah) of Allah (swt) that the Final Prophet (saw) was granted a miracle, that remained amongst humanity, after his (saw) return to Allah (swt). Elaborating on the uniqueness of the Miracle of the Quran, Ibn Khaldoon (ابن خلدون) stated in his Muqaddimah (مقدمة), فاعلم أن أعظم المعجزات وأشرفها وأوضحها دلالة القرآن الكريم المنزل على نبينا محمد فإن الخوارق في الغالب تقع مغايرة للوحي الذي يتلقاه النبي ويأتي بالمعجزة شاهدة بصدقه والقرآن هو بنفسه الوحي المدعى وهو الخارق المعجز فشاهده في عينه ولا يفتقر إلى دليل مغاير له كسائر المعجزات مع الوحي فهو أوضح دلالة لاتحاد الدليل والمدلول فيه وهذا معنى قوله ما من نبي من الأنبياء إلا وأتى من الآيات ما مثله آمن عليه البشر وإنما كان الذي أوتيته وحيا أوحى إلي فإنا أرجو أن أكون أكثرهم تابعا يوم القيامة يشير إلى أن المعجزة متى كانت بهذه المثابة في الوضوح وقوة الدلالة وهو كونها نفس لوعي كان الصدق لها أكثر لوضوحها فكثر المصدق المؤمن وهو التابع ولأمله "Know that the evidence of the noble Quran, which was revealed to our Prophet Muhammad (saw), is the greatest, noblest and clearest miracle. Miracles are as a rule brought by a Prophet separately from the Revelation he receives. The Miracle comes as an evidence for his truthfulness. This is obvious. The Quran, on the other hand, is in itself the claimed Revelation, whilst it is also in itself the wondrous Miracle. It is its own evidence. It requires no external evidence, as do the other Miracles, brought in connection with Revelations. It is the clearest evidence there can be, because it unifies within itself both the evidence and what is to be evidenced. This is the meaning of the saying of Muhammad (saw), «مَا مِنْ نَبِيٍّ مِنَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ إِلَّا أُعْطِيَ مِنْ» "Every Prophet was given unmatched signs to provide reassurance for mankind. What I have been given is also a Revelation that was revealed to me. Therefore, I hope to have the greatest number of followers on the day of resurrection." [Bukhari] He (saw) refers to the fact that a Miracle which is identical to the Revelation, is of such clarity and force of evidence, that it will be found truthful, because of its clarity, by the greatest number of people. Therefore, many are those who consider the Prophet truthful and believe. They are the "followers," the Ummah of Islam."

The Challenge of the Noble Quran for the Experts in Arabic Linguistics

Allah (swt) challenged the Arabs with the production of the like of the Quran and then added to their despair by reducing it to ten surahs and then a single surah, of which the shortest is just three sentences. The famous scholar as-Suyooti in his book, *Proficiency in the Knowledge of Quran* (الإتقان في علوم القرآن) Volume 3, Chapter 64, summarizes the history of the challenge as follows, وَلَمَّا جَاءَ بِهِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَكَانُوا أَفْصَحَ الْفُصَحَاءِ وَمَصَافِعَ الْخُلَبَاءِ وَتَحَدَّاهُمْ عَلَى أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِهِ وَأَمَّهُلَهُمْ طَوْلَ السَّيِّئِينَ فَلَمْ يَقْدِرُوا كَمَا قَالَ تَعَالَى {فَلْيَأْتُوا بِحَدِيثٍ مِثْلِهِ إِنْ كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ} ثُمَّ تَحَدَّاهُمْ بِعَشْرِ سُورٍ مِنْهُ فِي قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى {أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُورٍ مِثْلَهُ مُفْتَرِيَاتٍ وَادْعُوا مَنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ فَإِلَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ مَا أَنْزَلَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ} ثُمَّ تَحَدَّاهُمْ بِسُورَةٍ فِي قَوْلِهِ: {أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ} الْآيَةُ ثُمَّ كَرَّرَ فِي قَوْلِهِ: {وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ مُفْتَرِيَاتٍ وَادْعُوا مَنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ} الْآيَةُ فَلَمَّا عَجَزُوا عَنْ مُعَارَضَتِهِ وَالْإِثْبَانِ بِسُورَةٍ ... "وَإِعْجَازَ الْقُرْآنِ فَقَالَ: {قُلْ لَنْ يَجْتَمَعَ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا} when the Prophet (saw) brought the challenge to them, they were the most eloquent rhetoricians so he challenged them to produce the like of the Quran. Many years passed and they were unable to do so. Allah (swt) says, ﴿لْيَأْتُوا بِحَدِيثٍ مِثْلِهِ إِنْ كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ﴾ "Let them then produce a recitation similar to it if indeed they are truthful." [TMQ Surah At-Tur 52:34]. Then, they were challenged to produce ten chapters like it, where Allah (swt) says, ﴿أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُورٍ﴾ "Say, bring then ten chapters like it and call upon whomever you can besides Allah (swt) if you are truthful." [TMQ Surah Hud 11:13]. Then, they were challenged to produce a single surah, where Allah (swt) says, ﴿أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ﴾ "Or do they say he [i.e., the Prophet] has forged it? Say, bring a chapter like it and call upon whomever you can besides God, if you are truthful..." [TMQ Surah Yunus 10:38]. When they [Arabs] were unable to produce a single

surah like the Quran, despite there being the most eloquent rhetoricians found amongst them, their inability to meet the challenge made clear the inimitability of the Quran. Allah (swt) said, **قُلْ لَّيْنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا** **Say: if all of humankind and the jinn gathered together to produce the like of the Quran, they could not produce it—even if they helped one another...** [TMQ Surah Al-Isra'a 17:88].

The Failure of the Experts in Arabic Linguistics in the Time of the Prophet Muhammad (saw)

Despite the presence of a multitude of linguistic experts, in both poetry and prose, the challenge of the Quran could not be met. Imam Al-Baqillani states, وقد أدهش القرآن العرب لما سمعوه، وحير ألبابهم وعقولهم بسحر بيانه، وروعة معانيه، ودقة ائتلاف ألفاظه ومبانيه، فمنهم من آمن به ومنهم مكفر، وافترقت كلمة الكافرين على وصفه، وتباينت في نعته، فقال بعضهم، هو شعر، وقال فريق: إنه سحر، وزعمت طائفة أنه أساطير الاولين اكتتبها محمد، فهي تملئ عليه **The Quran astonished the Arabs, when they heard it. It confounded their hearts and minds with its mesmerizing expression, the splendor of its meanings and the accuracy in the combination of its words and premises. There were those who believed in it and those who rejected. The response of the kuffar differed over its characteristic and varied over its construction. Some of them said, it is poetry, and a group said, it is illusion, and another group claimed that it was legends of the ancients, written by Muhammad (saw), which were dictated to him, morning and evening. And some people said that it is a falsehood that he (saw) fabricated, whilst foreign people helped him.**

When the Arabs would listen to the Noble Quran, they were overwhelmed by the supreme majesty of its eloquence. Even the master of Arabic linguistics, al-Walid ibn al-Mughira, who had heard the Prophet (saw) reciting the Quran, said, والله ما منكم رجل أعرف بالأشعار مني ولا أعلم برجزه وقصيده، والله ما يشبه الذي يقوله شيئاً من هذا، والله إن لقوله الذي يقوله لحلاوة وإن عليه لطلاوة، وأنه لمورق أعلاه مغدق أسفله، وإنه ليعطو **By Allah! There is not a man amongst you who is more well-versed in poetry than me, or has more knowledge of its poetic meter (rajaz) or qasid (poem with tripartite structure) than me! I swear by Allah! There is nothing that resembles what he says in the least. By Allah in the speech that he utters there is a sweetness and in it there is elegance. At its highest, it is fresh green and verdant, whilst at its lowest, it is copious and abundant. Verily it is the highest and nothing is higher than it.** This admission is despite the fact that al-Walid persisted with his kufr through arrogance.

It is to be considered that the foremost of Arabic linguists in human history, existed in the time of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). No-one has ever produced even one surah like that of the Quran and the most knowledgeable did not even attempt to do so.

The Inimitable Style of the Miraculous Quran

In his book, *The Miracle of the Quran* (إعجاز القرآن), Imam Al-Baqillani (الباقلائي) stated, تأليف القرآن "The composition (ta'leef) of the Noble Quran was unprecedented (badee'), its characterization (waSaf) was supernatural (ghareeb) and its literary form (nazm) was extraordinary (ajeeb).

Imam al-Khattabi (الخطابي) said in "The Clarification of the Miracle of the Quran (بيان إعجاز)" that, "Know that the Quran is miraculously inimitable because it has come forth with the most eloquent words (alfaaz), arranged in the most beautiful organization of composition (ta'leef), containing the most valid meanings."

In his book, *Proficiency in the Knowledge of Quran* (الإتقان في علوم القرآن), Imam as-Sayyuti describes how the Quran's, "style (usloob) of expression astounded intellect and overwhelmed hearts, whilst the miracle of the literary form (nazm) that no one is capable except the Knower of the Unseen."

The words (alfaaz) (الفاظ), style (usloob) (أسلوب) and intents (maram) (مرام) of the ayaat completely captivates the emotions of man. The Miracle of the Quran is clearest in its eloquence (faSaaHah) (فصاحة) and expression (balaaghah) (بلاغة) of an astonishing level.

It is said of eloquence (faSaaHah), "the words are free from grammatical mistake, ambiguity and poor composition."

عِلْمُ الْبَلَاغَةِ: عِلْمُ الْمَعَانِي وَالْبَيَانِ وَالْبَدِيعِ (balaaghah), "Knowledge of expression: knowledge of meanings, elucidation and rhetoric." Knowledge of meanings (m'aanee) encompasses meanings contained within words, enabling the selection of the linguistic structure, that most appropriately depicts the meaning of the concept. Knowledge of elucidation (bayyan) deals with principles related to the different intents of sentences, matching the wording with the listener, appropriate to his circumstances. Knowledge of rhetoric (badee') deals with the aesthetic amplification of speech, through both meaning and wording, to strengthen its impact through vividness.

Style is when the meaning is arranged in coordinated words. Style is the way to depict the meanings graphically, in linguistic expressions. The style of the Quran has clarity (wuduh وضوح), intensity (quwwah قوة) and vividness (jamal جمال) that is inimitable by humankind. Its literary form (nazm) does not follow the standard method of the Arabs and is inimitable. In its nazm, the Quran does not adhere to anything from the types of poetry and prose that the Arabs had established.

The Clarity (WuduH وضوح) in the Miraculous Style of the Quran

The clarity of the style comes from the prominent manifestation of the intended meaning, using its most appropriate expression. Allah (swt) said, **﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَسْمَعُوا لِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَالْغَوْا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ﴾** **"And those who disbelieve say: "Do not even listen to his Quran, drowning it out, so that you may prevail."** [TMQ Surah Fussilat 41: 26]. In his tafsir of this ayah, Ibn Kathir stated, **"And when the Quran was recited to them, they used to increase yelling and speech about other things, so that they would not hear."**

Regarding **﴿وَالْغَوْا فِيهِ﴾** **"drowning it out,"** Imam Mujahid commentated, **﴿وَالْغَوْا فِيهِ﴾** **"whistling, hooting and heckling the Messenger of Allah (saw) when he recited Quran, which is what the Quraysh did."** Ibn Abbas (ra) made commentary that it is **﴿وَالْغَوْا فِيهِ﴾** **"blotting it out."**

Indeed, the Arabs in their mastery were stricken by the clarity of the Quran, compelled to avert their very hearing, lest they were overcome.

Imam Al-Baqillani comments regarding the striking clarity of the Noble Quran, **﴿فَمَا أَشْرَفَهُ مِنْ كِتَابٍ﴾** **بِتَضَمُّنِ صَدَقٍ مُتَحَمِّلِهِ، وَرِسَالَةٍ تَشْتَمِلُ عَلَى قَوْلٍ مُؤَدِّبٍ. بَيْنَ فِيهِ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ حُجَّتَهُ كَافِيَةٌ هَادِيَةٌ، لَا يَحْتَاجُ مَعَ وَضُوحِهَا إِلَى بَيِّنَةٍ تَعْدُوها، أَوْ** **"What is the most honorable of a Book that includes the truthfulness of its bearer, and a Message that includes the words of the Guide. He, Glory be to Him, clarified His argument sufficiently for guidance. In light of its clarity (wuduH), it does not need further clarifying evidence or elaborating argument. Deviation from it is like abandoning necessities and is uncertainty over the obvious."**

The Intensity (Quwwah) in the Miraculous Style of the Quran

Arabic is not only a grammatically intricate and precise language, it is a phonetic language, where words convey their meaning precisely through the way they sound, as well as their meaning.

The intensity (quwwah) of the style of the Noble Quran is by the inimitable choice of words which are compatible with the meaning they give.

The delicate (raeeq رَفِيق) meaning is expressed, by the delicate-sounding word. Allah (swt) said, **﴿وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيلًا (17) عَيْنًا فِيهَا شَمَىٰ سَلْسَبِيلًا﴾** **"And they will be given to drink there a cup (of wine) mixed with Zanjabil (ginger, etc.), and a spring there, called Salsabil."** [TMQ Surah Al-Insaan 76: 17-18].

The meaning of abundance (jazal جَزَل) is expressed with the abundant to the ear. Allah (swt) said, **﴿إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا (21) لِلطَّاغِينَ مَابًا (22) لَا يَبْثِنَ فِيهَا أَحْقَابًا﴾** **"Truly, Hell is a place of ambush, a dwelling place for the transgressors. They will abide therein for ages."** [TMQ Surah An-Naba 78: 21-23].

The reprehensible (mustankar مُسْتَنْكَر) meaning is expressed with the word that is reprehensible to the hearing. Allah (swt) said, **﴿إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ﴾** **"Verily, the harshest of all voices is the voice (braying) of the ass."** [TMQ Surah Luqmaan 31: 19]

The Vividness (Jamal) in the Style of the Quran

As for the vividness (jamal) of the uslub (style), it is in the choice of the purest and most appropriate expressions, for the meanings they convey, along with other words and meanings that complement these meanings, whether in the same sentence or accompanying sentences, conveying the most evocative depictions and compelling visualizations.

Allah (swt) said, ﴿رُبَّمَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ كَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ (2) ذَرُّهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا وَيَتَمَتَّعُوا وَيُلْهِمُ الْأَمَلُ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“Perhaps (often) will those who disbelieve wish that they were Muslims. (2) Leave them to eat and enjoy, and let them be preoccupied with (false) hope. They will come to know.” [TMQ Surah Al-Hijr 5: 2-3].

Imam Al-Baqillani said of jamal regarding the speech of the Quran, “والمنادى على نفسه بتميزه، وتخصصه برونقه وجماله، واعتراضه في حسنه ومائه proclaiming its distinctiveness by itself, its uniqueness in its brilliance and its vividness (jamal), and its display of its perfection and fluency.” Imam Al-Baqillani added, “Every word, even if it were singled out, is in vividness (jamal) of the ultimate degree.”

In his extensive and insightful book, *The Artistry in Depiction of the Quran* (التصور الفني في القرآن), Syed Qutb said, {وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُو رُءُوسِهِمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ}. هذا التعبير الذي (القرآن) يرسم صورة حية للخزي في يوم القيامة، ويصور هؤلاء المجرمين شخصاً قائماً يتملأها الخيال، وتكاد تبصرها العين لشدة وضوحها، وتسجيل هيئتها "ناكسو رؤوسهم" وعند من؟ "عند ربهم" فيخيل للسامع أنها حاضرة لا متخيلة.. هذه الصورة للهول لا تساوي من باحث وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُو رُءُوسِهِمْ في هذه العبارة، “So just consider the vivid expression, as in this expression, **“If only you could see the wicked hanging their heads (in disgrace) before their Lord.”** [TMQ Surah As-Sajdah 32:12]. This expression depicts a vibrant representation of disgrace on the Day of Resurrection. It depicts these criminals as looming figures, that overwhelm the imagination. The eyes can almost see the form, because of the strength in clarity (wudooh), as well as the registration of their form as نَاكِسُو رُءُوسِهِمْ “hanging their heads.” And before whom? **“before their Lord.”** So the listener conceives that it is in the current time, and not imaginary. This image of abject horror has no equivalent for the researcher in elucidation (balaaghah).”

The Literary Form of the Noble Quran

The Noble Quran confounded the experts in Arabic linguistics over its genre (tiraaz طراز) of expression, unlike the known forms of poetry (شعر) and prose (نثر). It has confounded all of humankind until today. In his book, *Proficiency in the Knowledge of Quran* (الإتقان في علوم القرآن), Imam as-Sayyuti spoke of, **“إِعْجَازُ نَظْمٍ لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ”** “the miracle of the literary form (nazm) that no one is capable of, except the Knower of the Unseen.”

In its literary form (nazm), the Noble Quran does not follow the standard method of symmetrical-rhythmic poetry (as-shi'r al-mawzun المُقَفَّى).

As for the forms of prose, the Noble Quran is not within the method of free, unrhymed prose (an-nathr al-mursal المُرْسَل). The Quran is not within the human method of an-nathr al-muzdawij (duplicated resemblance to rhymed and free prose المُزْدَوِّج). The muzdawij is a method described as, **“This method is based on the division of phrases, the skill of balancing sentences. The words are in equilibrium and the sentences are duplicated in a regular arrangement, in accordance to brevity (eejaaz إيجاز), equalization (musawaah مُساواة) and redundancy (itnaab إطناب), whatever the case may be.”** And the Quran is not imitable in the method of rhymed prose (an-nathr al-masjooh المَسْجُوع).

The Noble Quran is a unique composition, which the Arabs had never come across before and could not match. The fact that the Noble Quran is of a special genre and a unique structure is clear in every respect, whilst it clarifies, evokes and depicts in a manner that cannot be matched by humankind.

A Unique Form of Prose that is Similar to Poetry But is Not Poetry

The Noble Quran does contain prose (nathr نثر) that has similarity to poetry (sh'ir شعر). However, it is not poetry and remains a unique form of prose. The Noble Quran says, ﴿وَيُخْزِهُمْ وَيَنْصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ﴾ **“(Allah) will disgrace them and give you victory over them**

and heal the breasts of a believing people.” [TMQ Surah At-Tawba 9: 14]. The Noble Quran says, **لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ** “By no means shall you attain piety (al-birr) unless you spend (in Allah's Cause) of that which you love.” [TMQ Surah Aali Imrān 3: 92]. The words of prose contained in the two ayaat can be presented in the form of couplets, as in poetry. From the first ayah, the words can be presented as, ويخزهم وينصركم عليهم، ويشف صدور قوم مؤمنين. From the second ayah, the words can be presented as, لن تنالوا البر حتى، تنفقوا مما تحبون. However, these couplets are not poetry. Instead they are in fact a type of prose (نثر) which is unique and inimitable.

Then, there is also the following type of Quranic prose, which is far from poetry, in every respect, **وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ (1) وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ (2) النَّجْمُ الثَّاقِبُ (3) إِنَّ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ (4) فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ (5) خُلِقَ مِنْ مَّاءٍ دَافِقٍ (6) يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّرَائِبِ** “By the heaven, and at-Tariq (the night-comer, that is, the bright star); and what will make you to know what at-Tariq (night-comer) is? (It is) the star of piercing brightness; There is no human being without a protector over him (or her). So let man see from what he is created! He is created from a water gushing forth. Proceeding from between the back-bone and the ribs.” [TMQ Surah at-Taariq 86: 1-7].

Lengthening and Shortening of the Fikrah and Nafas in the Literary Form of the Noble Quran

The Noble Quran has written passage (فِكرَة) which is sentence and clause formation. The lengthening or shortening of the passage is varied in the written form. Accompanying the written form is the discipline of breathing cessation (nafas نفَس), during the recitation, in which the Qari recites, within a single breath.

Within the Noble Quran there is a form of prose in which the both the passage (فِكرَة) and the nafas are lengthened, **وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ** “We sent no Messenger, but to be obeyed by Allah’s leave. When they had been unjust to themselves, if only they had come to you and begged for Allah’s forgiveness, and the Messenger (saw) had begged forgiveness for them, indeed, they would have found Allah All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” [TMQ Surah An-Nisaa' 4:64]. There is also a form of prose in the Noble Quran in which the passage and the nafas are both shortened, **وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا (1) وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَاها (2) وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَاها (3) وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاها** “And by the sun and its brightness; And by the moon as it follows the sun; And by the day as it shows up (the sun's) brightness; And by the night as it conceals it (the sun).” [TMQ Surah Ash-Shams 91:1-4]. This lengthening and shortening is even though both the above mentioned examples, are examples of prose.

Then, the Noble Quran is inimitable in what resembles the free, unrhymed prose (an-nathr al-mursal المنثر المرسل) of human composition. So it says, **يَا أَيُّهَا الرِّسُولُ لَا يَحْزَنكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا سَمَّاعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ سَمَّاعُونَ لِقَوْلِ آخَرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ يَقُولُونَ إِنْ أُوتِيتُمْ هَذَا فَخُذُوهُ وَإِنْ لَمْ تُؤْتَوْهُ فَاحْذَرُوا وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُمْ فَبَدَّلَ قُلُوبَهُمْ لَّهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ** “O Messenger! Let not those who hurry to fall into disbelief grieve you, of such who say: “We believe” with their mouths but their hearts have no faith. And of the Jews are men who listen much and eagerly to lies - listen to others who have not come to you. They change the words from their places; they say, “If you are given this, take it, but if you are not given this, then beware!” And whomsoever Allah wants to put in fitna (error), you can do nothing for him against Allah. Those are the ones whose hearts Allah does not want to purify; for them there is a disgrace in this world, and in the Hereafter a great torment.” [TMQ Surah al-Maa'idah 5: 41].

The Rhymed Prose in the Literary Form of the Noble Quran

The Noble Quran is rhetorically inimitable in what resembles rhymed prose (an-nathr al-masjooh المنثر المسجوع). So it says, **يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ (1) قُمْ فَأَنذِرْ (2) وَرَبِّكَ فَكَذِّبْ (3) وَثِيَابَكَ فَطَهِّرْ (4) وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ (5)** “O you (Muhammad (saw)) enveloped (in garments)! Arise and warn! And your Lord (Allah) magnify! And your garments purify! And keep away from ar-rujz (the idols)! And give not a thing in order to have more (or consider not your deeds of Allah's obedience as a favor to Allah). And be patient for the sake of your Lord” [TMQ Surah Al-Muddathir 74: 1-7].

The Noble Quran is inimitable in what resembles an-nathr al-muzdawij (duplicated resemblance to rhymed and free prose (النثر المُزدَوِّج)). So the Quran states, ﴿الْهَاجِمُ التَّكَاثُرَ (1) حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ (2) كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ (3) ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ (4) كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ (5) لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ (6)﴾ “The mutual rivalry for piling up of worldly things diverts you. Until you visit the graves. Nay! You shall come to know! Again, Nay! You shall come to know! Nay! If you knew with a sure knowledge. Verily, you shall see blazing fire!” [TMQ at-Takaathur 102: 1-6]

Within what resembles human izdiwaj, the Quran flawlessly elongates the linguistic construction, astounding the listener, ﴿قَتَلَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا أَكْفَرُهُ (17) مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ (18) مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَرَهُ (19) ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ يَسَّرَهُ (20) ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُ فَأَقْبَرَهُ (21) ثُمَّ إِذَا شَاءَ أَنشَرَهُ (22) كَلَّا لَمَّا يُفْضِ مَا أَمَرَهُ (23) فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ (24) أَنَا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا (25) ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْأَرْضَ شِقَاقًا (26) فَأَنبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا (27) وَعَجَبًا وَقَضْبًا (28) وَزَيْنُونًا وَنَخْلًا (29) وَحَدَائِقَ غُلْبًا (30) وَكَافَّةً وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً قَالَ إِنَّكَ تُدْعَى بِالْحَكِيمِ (31)﴾ “Be cursed (the disbelieving) man! How ungrateful he is! From what thing did He create him? From nutfa (semen) He created them, and then set him due proportion; Then He makes the path easy for him; Then He causes him to die, and puts him in a grave; Then, when it is His Will, He will resurrect him (again). Nay, but (man) has not done what He commanded him. Then let man look at his food. That We pour forth water in abundance, and We split the earth in clefts, and We cause therein the grain to grow. And grapes and clover plants (green fodder for the cattle). And olives and date-palms. And gardens, dense with many trees. And fruits and abba (herbage etc.).” [TMQ Surah Abasa 80: 17-31].

Uniquely, the Noble Quran proceeds in a certain form of rhyming and then will fluently become another type of rhymed prose. So whilst proceeding in the rhyme of the following noble ayaat, **﴿فَإِذَا نَفَرَ فِي النَّافُورِ (8) فَذَلِكَ يَوْمُنَا يَوْمَ عَسِيرٍ (9) عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ غَيْرُ يَسِيرٍ﴾** “Then, when the Trumpet is sounded; Truly, that Day will be a hard day. Far from easy for the disbelievers.” [TMQ Al-Muddathir 74: 8-10], the Quran then abandons the previous rhyming, for a new rhyming, in the verse immediately after it. The Quran states, **﴿ذُرْنِي وَمَنْ خَلَفْتْ وَحِيدًا (11) وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُ مَالًا مَمْلُودًا (12) وَبَتَيْتْ (13) شُهُودًا (14) ثُمَّ يَطْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ (15) كَلَّا إِنَّهُ كَانَ لِآيَاتِنَا عَنِيدًا (16) سَأَرْهَقُهُ صَغُودًا﴾** “Leave Me Alone (to deal) with whom I created Alone! And then granted him resources in abundance. And children to be by his side! And made life smooth and comfortable for him! After all that he desires - that I should give more; Nay! Verily, he has been stubborn and opposing Our Ayaat (signs/proofs). I shall oblige him to face a severe torment!” [TMQ Al-Muddathir 74: 11-17]. Then the Quran moves from this type of rhyming to yet another type, in the verse that immediately follows it. So it says, **﴿إِنَّهُ فَكَّرَ وَقَدَّرَ (18) فَقَبِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ (19) ثُمَّ قَبِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ (20) ثُمَّ نَظَرَ (21) ثُمَّ عَبَسَ (22) ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ﴾** “Verily, he thought and plotted; So let him be cursed, how he plotted! Then he thought; Then he frowned and he looked in a bad tempered way; Then he turned back and he was proud.” [TMQ Al-Muddathir 74: 18-23]

Indeed, the Noble Quran astonished the foremost Arabic linguists throughout the ages. It resembles the linguistic forms of humans, but it is inimitable in those very forms, frustrating all those who tried, whilst the most capable did not even dare to try.

The Combination between the Expression and the Literary Form in the Noble Quran

Indeed, the style of the Quran has clarity (wuduh), intensity (quwwah) and vividness (jamal) that man cannot match. In addition, it has a literary form whose shortening, elongation and rhythm is inimitable by all of humankind. The Noble Quran combines the meanings, elucidation and rhetoric, with the literary form in an astounding combination.

When the meaning is delicate (raqeeq رَقيق), the Noble Quran uses delicate sounding words, within softly flowing (salis سلس) sentences. The Noble Quran says, **﴿إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا (31) حَدَائِقَ وَأَعْنَابًا (32) وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا (33) وَكَأْسًا دِهَاقًا (34).﴾** [TMQ Surah an Naba' 78:31-34]

When the meaning is abundant (جَزْل), the Noble Quran uses grandiose (fakhm فَحْم) sounding words, within richly abundant sentences. The Noble Quran says, **﴿إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا (21) لِلطَّاغِينَ (22) لَابِثِينَ فِيهَا أَحْقَابًا (23) لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا (24) إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَعَسَافًا (25) جَرَاءً وَفَاقًا﴾** “Truly, Hell is a place of ambush, a dwelling place for the Taghun (Those who transgress the limits set by Allah). They will abide therein for age, nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any drink.

Except boiling water, and dirty wound discharges. An exact recompense (according to their evil crimes).” [TMQ Surah An-Naba’ 78: 21-26].

The meaning is accompanied with forms of expression that amplify the meanings, within a literary form whose rhythm moves the soul. That is why the Noble Quran evokes such powerful emotions in the listener. As for the one who is aware of the meaning, the Quran amplifies the meanings with the eloquence of its elucidation and rhetoric. It incites a deep sense of awe, such that some of the foremost Arab linguists almost prostrated before it, despite obstinate persistence in their disbelief.

The Precise Attention to Letters (حُرُوف) and their Manner of Phonetic Articulation (Makhaarij مخارج), within Words and Sentences

When placing letters together, the Noble Quran gives inimitable precise attention to the sounds (sounds أصوات) that come out from their manner of articulation (مخارج).

Makharij are the articulation points for the pronunciation of letters. They are defined according to the movement of the mouth or throat (oropharynx) that originate the sound of the letter. Mukharij identify the correct positioning of the organs of speech, so that the letter becomes distinct from others. The correct use of makharij is essential to tajweed of the Noble Quran.

In the Noble Quran, letters that have closeness in articulation (tuqaarib تَقَارُب) are placed close to each other, in a word or in a sentence. So in the noble ayah, ﴿أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ﴾ **“Or like a rainstorm from the sky.”** [TMQ Surah al-Baqarah 2:19]. The Quran does not say, كالباعق (kal ba’iq a-mudfiq) “like incessant rain.” Instead it says, كَصَيِّبٍ (kasayyib) **“like a rainstorm.”** The Noble Quran says, ﴿عَالِيَهُمْ ثِيَابٌ سُنْدُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ﴾ **“upon them will be garments of green fine silk.”** [TMQ Surah Al-Insaan 76:21]. It uses سُنْدُسٍ خُضْرٌ instead of الهُنْع which is equivalent, but does not maintain closeness in articulation.

When there is distance between the points of articulation (tubaa’ud تَبَاعُد), they are separated by a letter which eliminates any clumsiness in the transition. When it is necessary to use letters with distance in articulation, that are the most appropriate for the meaning that is to be conveyed, the Noble Quran does so, with precision. So the Quran says, ﴿تِلْكَ إِذًا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَى﴾ **“If so, it is an unjust division.”** (TMQ Surah an Najam 53:22), the Quran uses ضِيزَى **“deeza”** rather than its synonyms ظَلِيمَة (zaalima) and جَائِرٌ (jaa’irah).

Along with the precision regarding articulation, the Noble Quran makes a particular letter pleasant (muhabbab مُحَبَّب) in articulation and light (khafeef خَفِيف) upon the ears, when repeated, like the harmonic refrains in a reading of poetry. The letter which is in a harmonic refrain is clearly found in verses, with frequency.

For example, the Verse of the Throne (آية الكرسي ayatul Kursiyy). The Noble Quran says, ﴿اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ﴾ **“Allah. There is no god except He, the Ever-Living, the Superb Upright Sustainer. Slumber does not overtake Him, nor sleep; to Him (belongs) whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Who is there that intercedes for His Providence except by His Permission? He knows whatever is in front of them and whatever is behind them, and they do not encompass anything of His Knowledge except whatever He has decided. His Throne embraces the heavens and the earth; the preserving of them (Literally: them both) does not tire Him; and He is The Ever-Exalted, The Ever-Magnificent.”** [TMQ Surah al-Baqarah 2:255].

The letter ل “lam” is repeated in the Verse of the Throne twenty-three times, in a pleasant harmonic refrain, compelling the listener to hear more.

The Challenge for Today

The Noble Quran is indeed a unique genre (tiraaz طِرَاز), inimitable by humankind. It is a miracle, revealed as a challenge to establish the Message of Prophet Muhammad (saw).

The composition of the Quran was overwhelming for the Arabs for twenty-three years. Incapable of meeting the challenge, they resorted to slander, threat, war and exile. Imam Al-Baqillani said, وقال غير هؤلاء وهؤلاء: لو نشاء قلنا مثل هذا. ولكنهم لم يقولوا هم ولا غيرهم لان تأليف القرآن البديع، ووصفه

الغريب، ونظمه العجيب، قد أخذ عليهم منافذ البيان كلها وقطع أطماعهم في معارضته، فظلوا مقموعين مدحورين ثلاثة وعشرين عاما، يتجرعون مرارة الاخفاق، ويهطعون لقوارع التكييت، وينغضون رؤوسهم تحت مقارع التحدي والتعير، مع أنفتهم وعزتهم، واستكمال عدتهم وكثرة خطبائهم وشعرائهم، وشيوع البلاغة فيهم، والتهاب قلوبهم بنار عداوته، وترادف الحوافز إلى مناهضته، وعرفانهم أن معارضته بسورة واحدة أو آيات يسيرة أنقض لقوله، وأفل في إطفاء أمره، وأنجع في تحطيم دعوته، وتفريق الناس عنه - من مناجزته، "Yet others said if only we could express something similar to it. However, they did not say that, nor did others, because of the wonderful composition of the Quran, its extraordinary characteristic and its astonishing arrangement. It seized upon them with all forms of expression and stifled their ambition to oppose it. For twenty-three years, they remained quelled and defeated, drenched in abject failure, with their heads bowed down before the onslaught of challenge and confrontation. This was all despite their nobility and pride, not lacking in numbers, the large number of their preachers and poets, the prevalence of eloquence among them, the burning of their hearts within the fire of enmity and the confluence of motives to oppose him (saw). This was all with their knowledge that opposing him (saw) with a single surah or a few verses would refute his (saw) saying. Such an opposition would be more effective in extinguishing his affair, destroying his Da'wah and separating the people from him than defiance of him, waging war upon him (saw), threatening lives and wealth and expulsion from homes and exiling from lands."

Moreover, the challenge of the Noble Quran is not specific to those whom it addressed directly in the time of Muhammad (saw), at the time of Revelation. It is a perennial challenge laid down until the Day of Judgement. This is due to the principle, "العِبْرَةُ بِعُمُومِ اللَّفْظِ لَا بِخُصُوصِ السَّبَبِ" "The expression is in accordance with the generality of the text and not the specificity of the cause (of Revelation)." The Noble Quran previously confounded the Arab elite, despite their hostility. Today, it confounds hostile Western governments. Just like the Arabs of the Days of Ignorance, the Western governments resort to slander, threat and war to suppress the Message, unable to meet the challenge that establishes its Truth (Haq).

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