

# The Authorship of Al-Quran

**A look into whether Al-Quran could have been written by Muhammad (PBUH) himself**

(Part 1 of 3):  
The Words of a Human?

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**A**lthough it is proven that the text of Al-Quran has remained intact till today, how are we sure that the words actually originated from Allah (SWT) and not some other source? This takes us to look at the authenticity, authority, or source of Al-Quran.

Concerning the authorship of Al-Qur'an, Muslims believe that it was revealed verbatim (i.e. word for word) by Allah (SWT), to Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him. Non-Muslims, however, who do not support this view, can have no differences with Muslims concerning the fact that Al-Quran was at least first witnessed to be uttered by Muhammad (PBUH), a Mekahan Arab in the 7th century and, as proved above, there have been no changes to the records of his utterances since then.

Muslims' claim of "internal evidence" for the divine authorship of the Quran, i.e. from statements to that effect in Al-Quran itself (e.g. QS Al-Nisa/4:82; QS Al-An'am/6:19, 92; Al-Naml/27:6; Al-Jathiyah/45:2, etc.), is understandably looked upon with skepticism, as nearly anyone can quote passages from his or her scripture that claim the scripture in question is revelation from God. We are therefore forced by reason and objectivity to look elsewhere for "external evidence" of Al-Quran's divine source or authority.

The simple proposed structure for the presentation of this "external evidence" is an elimination process, where we get to the answer of the question – "Who is the author of Al-Quran?" – by eliminating all alternative answers to this question which are definitely implausible. In other words, the

definite or (at least) most probable author or source of Al-Quran is identified by eliminating unacceptable alternative candidates.

There are various contradictory views and opinions held by some non-Muslims as to the source of Al-Quran. The following list of "possible" authors reflects the main theories:

- 1) Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
- 2) Some other Arab poet(s), scholars, etc.
- 3) Some non-Arab scholars, or poets or religious personalities.
- 4) Monks or Rabbis (i.e. from the Bible or Judeo-Christian sources).
- 5) Satan (or other deceitful "spirits" or "aliens," etc.).
- 6) God.

We may now proceed to examine from a closer study of Al-Quran and history how plausible these theories are.

## **Muhammad (PBUH): Unlettered and Had No Teachers**

The fact that Muhammad (PBUH) could neither read nor write (QS Al-Ankabut/29:48) is well known and uncontested by even his non-Muslim contemporaries and present day historians. He had no schooling or teacher of any kind. He had never been known to compose oral poetry or prose. Al-Quran, with its all-embracing laws and freedom from all inconsistencies, has its greatness acknowledged even by non-Muslim scholars. Its contents treat social, economic, political and religious legislation, history, views of the universe, living things, thought, human transactions, war, peace, marriage, worship, business, and everything relating to life - with no contradicting principles. Al-Quran has never been edited or revised as it was never in need of any

revision or correction. How were such vast subject areas expounded upon with such precision by a 7th century Arab with no formal education or even the ability to read what scant material there may have been in his environment on such topics? Where and when has history ever produced an illiterate author of such a scripture?

## **Muhammad's (PBUH) Known Integrity**

Muhammad (PBUH)'s sincerity, truthfulness and integrity were so well known that he was even nicknamed "Al-Amin" (The Trustworthy) by his pre-Islamic community. Not a single lie is recorded against him, and many modern Western Orientalists have themselves admitted that contrary to any deliberate deception, that the Prophet had a profoundly sincere conviction that it was revealed to him by Allah (SWT) Himself is undeniable.

If his integrity had been in question, and he was supposed to have been motivated by the desire for personal glory to produce Al-Quran, why then would he disclaim authorship and instead claim it was from Allah (SWT), especially when the pagan Mekahans had conceded that no one could produce such a scripture (QS Al-Baqarah:23-24, Al-Isra/17:88, etc.), but only marvel at it? His enemies even offered him kingship over Mekah and any riches he desired if only he would stop reciting. If it was true that he desired his personal glory and leadership, why would he decline the offer when it was presented to him and instead prefer a life of humility, simplicity, persecution, sanctions, and even hostile attack by those who felt threatened by the Message of One God?

In addition, how reason-

able is it to believe that unlettered Muhammad (PBUH) would author Al-Quran for personal benefit and then within Al-Quran correct and reprove himself? For example:

*"He frowned and turned away when the blind man came to him..."* (QS Abasa/80:1-2)

And also,

*"...And you did fear men, though God is more deserving that you should fear Him"* (QS Al-Ahzab/33:37)

There are other verse you may refer to, such as QS Al-

Kahfi/18:23-24, and others. Why would he embarrass himself when he could simply omit or favorably modify such verses in Al-Quran? They were certainly not to his advantage if his goals were power and prestige. The existence of such verses only proves that Muhammad (PBUH) was indeed a truthful and sincere Messenger of God!

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Two young Salar students held two volumes of Al-Quran, copied and illuminated in Central Asia. These Qurans are now kept under heavy security in a purpose-built building in Xunhua county, and play a central role in the cultural politics of Salar identity.