

**Description:** A series of articles compelling the reader to ponder over the marvels of the Quran. Part 3: Two examples of scientific facts mentioned in the Quran.

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### Ask Those Who Have Knowledge

Another interesting attitude that exists in the Quran repeatedly deals with its advice to the reader. The Quran informs the reader about different facts and then gives the advice: "If you want to know more about this or that, or if you doubt what is said, then you should ask those who have knowledge." This too is a surprising attitude. It is not usual to have a book that comes from someone without training in geography, botany, biology, etc., who discusses these subjects and then advises the reader to ask men of knowledge if he doubts anything. Yet in every age there have been Muslims who have followed the advice of the Quran and made surprising discoveries. If one looks to the works of Muslim scientists of many centuries ago, one will find them full of quotations from the Quran. These works state that they did research in such a place, looking for something. And they affirm that the reason they looked in such and such a place was that the Quran pointed them in that direction.

For example, the Quran mentions **man's origin** and then tells the reader, "Research it!" It gives the reader a hint where to look and then states that one should find out more about it. This is the kind of thing that Muslims today largely seem to overlook - but not always, as illustrated in the following example.

### Embryology

A few years ago, a group of men in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia collected all of the verses in the Quran which discuss *embryology* - the growth of the human being in the womb. They said, "Here is what the Quran says. Is it the truth?" In essence, they took the advice of the Quran: "Ask the men who know." They chose, as it happened, a non-Muslim who is a professor of embryology at the University of Toronto. His name is Keith Moore, and he is the author of textbooks on embryology - a world expert on the subject. They invited him to Riyadh and said, "This is what the Quran says about your subject. Is it true? What can you tell us?"

While he was in Riyadh, they gave him all the help that he needed in translation and all of the cooperation for which he asked. And he was so surprised at what he found that he changed his textbooks. In fact, in the second edition of one of his books, called *Before We Are Born...* in the section about the history of embryology, he included some material that was not in the first edition because of what he found in the Quran was ahead of its

time and that those who believe in the Quran know what other people do not know.

I had the pleasure of interviewing Dr. Keith Moore for a television presentation, and we talked a great deal about this - it was illustrated by slides and so on. He mentioned that some of the things that the Quran states about the growth of the human being were not known until thirty years ago. In fact, he said that one item in particular - the Quran's description of the human being as a "**leech-like clot**" (*'alaqah*) [Quran 40:67] - was new to him; but when he checked on it, he found that it was true, and so he added it to his book. He said, "I never thought of that before," and he went to the zoology department and asked for a picture of a leech. When he found that it looked just like the human embryo, he decided to include both pictures in one of his textbooks.

Although the aforementioned example of man researching information contained in the Quran deals with a non-Muslim, it is still valid because he is one of those who is knowledgeable in the subject being researched. Had some layman claimed that what the Quran says about embryology is true, then one would not necessarily have to accept his word. However, because of the high position, respect, and esteem man gives to scholars, one naturally assumes that if they research a subject and arrive at a conclusion based on that research, then the conclusion is valid.

## Skeptic's Reaction

Dr. Moore also wrote a book on *clinical embryology*, and when he presented this information in Toronto, it caused quite a stir throughout Canada. It was on the front pages of some of the newspapers across Canada, and some of the headlines were quite funny. For instance, one headline read: "SURPRISING THING FOUND IN ANCIENT PRAYER BOOK!" It seems obvious from this example that people do not clearly understand what it is all about. As a matter of fact, one newspaper reporter asked Professor Moore, "Don't you think that maybe the Arabs might have known about these things - the description of the embryo, its appearance and how it changes and grows? Maybe they were not scientists, maybe they did some crude dissections on their own - carved up people and examined these things." The professor immediately pointed out to him that he [i.e., the reporter] had missed a very important point - all of the slides of the embryo that had been shown and that had been projected in the film had come from pictures taken through a microscope. He said, "It does not matter if someone *had* tried to discover embryology fourteen centuries ago. They could not have seen it!"

All of the descriptions in the Quran of the appearance of the embryo are of the item when it is still too small to see with the eye; therefore, one needs a microscope to see it. Since such a device had only been around for little more than two hundred years, Dr. Moore taunted, "Maybe fourteen centuries ago someone secretly had a microscope and did this research, making no mistakes anywhere. Then he somehow taught Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, and convinced him to put this information in his book. Then he destroyed his equipment and kept it a secret forever. Do you believe that? You really should not unless you bring some proof because it is such a ridiculous theory." In fact, when he was asked, "How do you explain this information in

the Quran?" Dr. Moore's reply was, "It could only have been divinely revealed!"

## Geology

One of Professor Moore's colleagues, Marshall Johnson, deals extensively with *geology* at the University of Toronto. He became very interested in the fact that the Quran's statements about embryology are accurate, and so he asked Muslims to collect everything contained in the Quran which deals with his specialty. Again people were very surprised at the accuracy of the findings. Since there are a vast number of subjects discussed in the Quran, it would certainly require a large amount of time to exhaust each subject. It suffices for the purpose of this discussion to state that the Quran makes very clear and concise and correct statements about various subjects while simultaneously advising the reader to verify the authenticity of these statements with research by scholars in those subjects. And as illustrated by the previous examples of embryology and geology, the Quran has clearly emerged authentic.

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