

# A Dialogue between a Muslim Man and an American Christian Woman

## Part 5

By Mohsen El-Guindy

Jennifer became addicted to Omar's conversations. She was quivering with emotions to know exactly what sort of structure Omar was composed of. Such preserved and upright attitude overwhelmed her. She sees him handsome and robust, yet he unbelievably abstains from the temptations of life surrounding him. He is obedient only to the world of his own religion. He has planned his life in a way that would benefit his body and soul. In the morning he is sporting either in the jammysiam or by running for an hour. At noon he is in the university library nourishing his mind with all the information he can get about America. During the hours of the day he performs his five prayers without fatigue. He is a man who respects his body, purifies his soul and enlightens his mind. On his prayer's mat he sits in the attitude of meditation irradiating serenity, goodness, and selflessness. His mind is a book memorizing the words of Allah and the tradition of Prophet Mohamed - words matching reason and intellect. He preserves his body for a wife who can share with him the life of just and truth. Omar answered all her questions with logic and understanding. It is true that his answers were based on Islamic laws, yet they were honest and made sense to her. Somehow, she feels that his pure soul that hadn't committed sins before could interact with Allah, could ask Allah and be heard. Allah is looking over him because he is confronting the world of sins and falsehood. A man like that, willing to lay down his life for his beliefs would certainly win the kingdom of heaven, and all doors will be opened for him.

Omar's personality penetrated into her soul to the extent of feeling that he is the only one who could lead her to the shore of safety, the shore of freedom. Omar is wise, and wisdom is the means to freedom. But what kind of freedom she is seeking and she is already a free independent woman? She wants the freedom of being a good virtuous woman. She wants to claim her right to be a mother of so many children that would fill the beautiful house she bought. Hers is the generation that degraded America and she will not continue to take part in it. Omar's sincere words made her wish the ground would open and swallow her. Yes, she must change her life to the better. What's wrong with her as a woman so not to live as Allah wished her to be? She came from a good family. She graduated from the university and got a

good job. She worked hard to buy her house and she furnished it with good furniture.

She knew several men before Walker and lived with them in her own house. All they wanted was sex, to live with her without commitment, and at that time she didn't mind either. But Walker was different. He was her colleague in high school. He always impressed her by his jokes and amicable discussions. Their friendship had quickly turned into a quiet love that made the years of high school end up quickly. Walker then joined the Military Academy at West Point in New York, while she joined the School of Business Administration at Maryland University. They didn't see each other for years until they met in a party. There, they renewed their relationship and she accepted living with him temporarily in his apartment. When she bought her new home, Walker agreed to move in and live in a more spacious place. Walker was the man whom she truly loved. They can live together as man and wife. He can be the father of her children. She wanted to open the subject of marriage with Walker again but she feared he might reject her offer as he did several times before.

In an early morning Omar surprisingly found Jennifer wearing her training suit and waiting for him at the entrance of the house. She wanted to share with him the routine running of the morning. They ran for half an hour, and on their way back she suggested that they sit in a quiet park. They came to a vacant bench and sat. The air was cold and refreshing, and the leaves of the trees were dancing with the morning breeze. Omar knew that Jennifer had questions to ask, or something important to say.

Jennifer commenced the talk:

“I also heard that Muslim women have no right to inherit their parents or their deceased husbands. They also are not entitled to own properties as men. Is that true?”

Omar explained, “The three religions share an unshakable belief in the importance of marriage and family life. They also agree on the leadership of the husband over the family. Nevertheless, blatant differences do exist among the three religions with respect to the limits of this leadership. The Judea-Christian tradition, unlike Islam, virtually extends the headship of the husband into ownership of his wife.

The Jewish tradition regarding the husband's role towards his wife stems from the conception that he owns her as he owns his slave. This conception has been the reason behind the double standard in the laws of adultery and behind the husband's ability to annul his wife's vows. This conception has also been responsible for denying the wife any control over her property or

her earnings. As soon as a Jewish woman got married, she completely lose any control over her property or her earnings to her husband. Jewish Rabbis asserted the husband's right to his wife's property as a corollary of his possession to her. Thus, marriage caused the richest woman to become practically penniless. The Talmud describes the financial situation of a wife as follows:

*“How can a woman have anything; whatever is hers belongs to her husband. What is his is his and what is hers is also his...Her earnings and what she may find in the street are also his. The household articles, even the crumbs of bread on the table, are his. Should she invite a guest to her house and feed him, she would be stealing from her husband...” (San. 71a, Git. 62a).*

The fact of the matter is that the property of a Jewish female was meant to attract suitor. A Jewish family would assign their daughter a share of her father's estate to be used as a dowry in case of marriage. It was this dowry that made Jewish daughters an unwelcome burden to their fathers. The father had to raise his daughter for years and then prepare for her marriage by providing a large dowry. Thus, a girl in a Jewish family was a liability and not asset. The dowry was the wedding gift presented to the groom under terms of tenancy. The husband would act as a practical owner of the dowry but he could not sell it. The bride would lose any control over the dowry at the moment of marriage. Moreover, she was expected to work after marriage and all her earnings had to go to her husband in return for her maintenance, which was his obligation. She could regain her property only in two cases: divorce or her husband's death. Should she dies first, he would inherit her property. In the case of the husband's death, the wife could regain her pre-marital property but she was not entitled to inherit any share in her deceased husband's own property. It has to be added that the groom had to present a marriage gift to his bride, yet again he was the practical owner of his gift as long as they were married.

Christianity until recently has followed the same Jewish tradition. Both religious and civil authorities in the Christian Roman Empire after Constantine required a property agreement as a condition for recognizing the marriage. Under Canon Law, a wife was entitled to restitution of her dowry if the marriage was annulled unless she was guilty of adultery. In this case she forfeited her right to the dowry which remained in her husband's hands. Under Canon and civil law a married woman in Christian Europe and America had lost her property rights until late nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries. For example, women's rights under English law were compiled and published in 1632. These rights included: "That which the husband hath is his own. That which the wife hath is the husband's." The wife not only lost her property upon marriage, she lost her personality as well. No act of her was of legal value. Her husband could repudiate any sale or gift made by her as being of no binding legal value. The person with whom she had any contract was held as a criminal for participating in a fraud. Moreover, she could not sue or be sued in her own name, nor could she sue her own husband. A married woman was practically treated as an infant in the eyes of the law. The wife simply belonged to her husband and therefore she lost her property, her legal personality, and her family name.

Islam since the seventh century C.E., has granted married women the independent personality which the Judea-Christian West had deprived them until very recently. In Islam the bride and her family are under no obligation whatsoever to present a gift to the groom. The girl in the Muslim family is no liability. A woman is so dignified by Islam that she does not need to present gifts to attract potential husbands. It is the groom who must present the bride with a marriage gift. This gift is considered her property, and neither the groom nor the bride's family have any share in or control over it. The bride retains her marriage gifts even if she is later divorced. The husband is not allowed any share in his wife's property except what she offers him with her free consent. The Koran has stated its position on this issue very clearly,

*"And give the women (on marriage) their dower as a free gift; but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it and enjoy it with right good cheer."* (4, 4).

The wife's property and earnings are under her full control and for her use alone since she and her children's maintenance are her husband's responsibility. No matter how rich the wife might be, she is not obliged to act as a co-provider for the family unless she herself voluntarily chooses to do so. Spouses do inherit from one another. Furthermore, a married woman in Islam retains her independent legal personality and her family name. One of the most important differences between the Koran and the Bible is their attitude towards female inheritance of the property of a deceased relative. The Biblical attitude had been described by Rabbi Epstein: "The continuous and unbroken tradition since the Biblical days gives the female members of the household, wife and daughters, no right of succession to the family estate. In the more primitive scheme of succession, the female

members of the family were considered part of the estate and as remote from the legal personality of an heir as the slave. Whereas by Mosaic enactment the daughters were admitted to succession in the event of no male issue remained, the wife was not recognized as heir even in such conditions.”

Why were the female members of the family considered part of the family estate? Rabbi Epstein has the answer: “They are owned before marriage by the father, after marriage by the husband.”

The Biblical rules of inheritance indicate that a wife is given no share in her husband’s estate, while he is her first heir, even before her sons. A daughter can inherit only if no male heirs exist. A mother is not an heir at all while the father is. Widows and daughters, in case male children remained, were at the mercy of the male heirs for provision. That is why widows and orphan girls were among the most destitute members of the Jewish society.

Christianity has followed suit for long time. Both the ecclesiastical and civil laws of Christendom barred daughters from sharing with their brothers in the father’s patrimony. Besides, wives were deprived of any inheritance rights. These iniquitous laws survived till late in the last century.

Among the pagan Arabs before Islam, inheritance rights were confined exclusively to the male relatives. The Koran abolished all these unjust customs and gave all the female relatives inheritance shares:

*“From what is left by parents and those nearest related there is a share for men and a share for women, whether the property be small or large—a determinate share.” (4, 7).*

Muslim mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters had received inheritance rights 1425 years before Europe recognized that these rights even existed. The general rule is that the female share is half that of the male except the cases in which the mother receives equal share to that of the father. The rationale behind this rule is that the financial obligations of men in Islam far exceed those of women. The groom must provide his bride with a marriage gift. This gift becomes her exclusive property and remains so if she is later divorced. The bride is under no obligation to present any gifts to her groom. Moreover, the Muslim husband is charged with the maintenance of his wife and children. The wife on the other hand is not obliged to help him in this regard. Her property and earnings are for her use alone except what she may voluntarily offer her husband.”

“Do Muslim women in the Muslim world today receive this noble treatment?” Jennifer asked.

“I cannot deny that the condition of women at times been regrettable in some parts of the Muslim world, but the same can also be said of the rest of the world at large. I do not wish to justify these circumstances, but only to make the point that they did not originate from the teachings of Islam itself. Muslim societies have to one degree or another, deviated from the ideals of Islam with respect to the status of women. These deviations have been in one of two opposite directions. The first direction is more conservative, restrictive, and tradition oriented, while the second is more liberal and Western-oriented.

The societies that have digressed in the first direction treat women according to the customs and traditions inherited from their forebears. These traditions usually deprive women of many rights granted to them by Islam. In such societies women are treated according to standards far different from those applied to men. This discrimination pervades the life of any female. She is received with less joy at birth than a boy; she is less likely to go to school; she might be deprived any share of her family’s inheritance; she is under continuous surveillance in order not to behave immodestly while her brother’s immodest acts are tolerated; she might even be killed for committing what her male family members usually boast of doing; she has very little say in family affairs or community interests; she might not have full control over her property and her marriage gifts; and finally as a mother she herself would prefer to produce boys so that she can attain a higher status in her community.

On the other hand, there are Muslim societies, or certain classes within some societies that have been swept over by the Western culture and way of life. These societies often imitate unthinkingly whatever they receive from the West and usually end up adopting the worst fruits of the Western civilization. In these societies, a typical modern woman’s top priority in life is to enhance her physical beauty rather than her intellect. One is not expected to find a copy of the Koran in her purse since it is full of cosmetics that accompany her wherever she goes. Her spirituality has no room in a society preoccupied with her attractiveness. Therefore, she would spend her life striving more to realize her femininity than to fulfill her humanity. Some Muslim societies have deviated from the Islamic percepts and have not adhered to the Koranic guidance with respect to women. There is a wide gap between what Muslims are supposed to believe in and what they actually practice. This gap has had disastrous consequences on the Muslim world manifested in almost all aspects of life; political, tyranny and fragmentation, economic backwardness, social injustice, scientific bankruptcy, intellectual stagnation, etc. The Muslim world is in need of a

renaissance that will bring it closer to the ideals of Islam and not far from them.

The notion that the poor status of Muslim women today is because of Islam is an utter misconception. The problems of Muslims in general are not due to too much attachment to Islam, but rather to detachment from it.

A proper understanding of the Judea-Christian historical context is crucial for understanding the significance of the contribution of Islam to world history and human civilization. The Judea-Christian tradition had been influenced and shaped by the environments, conditions, and cultures in which it had existed. By the seventh century C.E., this influence had distorted the original divine message that would guide humanity back to the straight path. The Koran described the mission of the new Messenger as a release for Jews and Christians from the heavy burdens that had been upon them:

*“Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own scriptures—In the law and the Gospel—For he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good and prohibits them from what is bad; He releases them from their heavy burden and from the yokes that are upon them.” (7, 157).*

Therefore Islam should not be viewed as a rival tradition to Judaism and Christianity. It has to be regarded as the consummation, completion, and perfection of the divine messages that had been revealed before it. It is bewildering why the religion that had revolutionized the status of women is being singled out and denigrated as so repressive of women. This myth is being perpetuated by a ceaseless barrage of sensational books, articles, media images, and Hollywood movies. The inevitable outcome of these incessant images has been total misunderstanding and fear of anything related to Islam. This negative portrayal of Islam in the world media has to end if we are to live in a world free from all traces of discrimination, prejudice, and misunderstanding .

Islam should be viewed as a religion that had immensely improved the status of women and had granted them many rights that the modern world had recognized only the last century. Islam still has too much to offer for today’s woman: dignity, respect and protection in all aspects and all stages of her life from birth until death, in addition to the recognition, the balance, and means for the fulfillment of all her spiritual, intellectual, physical, and emotional needs. No wonder most of those who choose to become Muslims in a country like Britain are women. In the U.S. women converts to Islam

outnumber male converts by 4 to 1. Islam has too much to offer our world which is in great need of moral guidance and leadership.

Ambassador Herman Elites, in a testimony in front of the committee of Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress in 1985 said, "The Muslim community of the globe today is in the neighborhood of one billion. That is an impressive figure. But what to me is equally impressive is that Islam today is the fastest growing monotheistic religion. This is something we have to take into account. Something is right about Islam. It is attracting a good many people. Yes something is right about Islam and it is about time for the West to find that out."

"There is an important point I would like to raise here" Jennifer protested. "You said before that Muslims believe in the divine origin of the Bible although they doubt the historical authenticity of some parts of the Old and New Testaments, and do not believe them to be exact representations of what Allah originally revealed. In fact, certain encyclopedias and various books claim that the Koran is the product of hallucinations that Mohamed underwent. Since all your explanations are based on the verses of the Koran and the words of the Prophet Mohamed, could you prove to me the authenticity of the Koran?"

"This is an important question. For forty years Mohamed blessings and peace upon him, had lived as an ordinary individual amongst his people. In that long period he had not been known as a statesman, a preacher, or an orator; none had heard him imparting wisdom and knowledge as he began to do thereafter. He had never been seen discoursing upon the principles of metaphysics, ethics, law, politics, economy or sociology. Not to speak of being a great general, he had not even been known as an ordinary soldier. He had uttered no words about Allah, the angels, the revealed Books, the early Prophets, the bygone nations, the Day of Judgment, the life after death, Hell and Heaven. No doubt he possessed an excellent character and charming manners; and he was well behaved, yet there was nothing striking and extraordinary about him which would make men expect something great and revolutionary from him in future. He was known among his acquaintances as a sober, calm, gentle, and trustworthy citizen of good nature, but when the message of Islam was descended upon him he was completely transformed. The unlettered Prophet of Islam when he began preaching his Message, the whole of Arabia stood in awe and wonder and was bewitched by his wonderful and miraculous Koran. The eloquence of the Koran was so impressive and captivating that his worst enemies were afraid of hearing it, lest it should penetrate deep into the recesses of their hearts or the very



marrow of their being and carry them off and make them abandon their old religion and culture. It was so without compare that the whole legion of the Arab poets, preachers and orators of the highest caliber failed to bring forth its equivalent in beauty of language and splendor of diction when he threw down the challenge to his opponents. Even although they put their heads together they could not produce even a single line like the ones he recited. The Prophet of Islam spoke with such learning and wisdom the like of which no one has displayed before and none could show after him. He expounded the intricate problems of metaphysics and theology; he delivered speeches upon the principles of the decline and fall of nations and empires, supporting his thesis with the historical examples from the past, and he taught ethical canons and principles of culture. He formulated such laws of social culture, economic organization, group conduct, and international relations that even eminent thinkers and scholars could grasp their true wisdom only after life-long experience of men and things. The beauties of what he said and spoke of, unfold themselves progressively as man advances in theoretical knowledge and practical experience.

One thing which surprised non-Muslims who are examining the Koran very closely is that it does not appear to them to be what they expected, an old book coming from the desert describing Bedouins living in it. They found out that the Koran does not resemble what they expected at all. They found that the Koran is not tied to a certain place and time. It talked about prophets, religions and centuries that came before Islam. It explained how people before Islam fell into error and went astray. It indicated the right path to be followed and the correct method to be adopted. It established an Islamic code of conduct for Muslims to follow. It emphasized the oneness of Allah and that Mohamed is the last of the messengers. The amazing thing in the Koran is also the scientific ideas it expressed. They do not seem to originate from the desert fourteen centuries ago. Because Allah would never allow any opportunity for the non-Muslims to claim that the Koran contradicts itself, He included in the Koran information and examples, which could stand the test of time. If the Koran were the product of Mohamed's hallucination as the enemies of Islam usually claim, then evidence of this would be apparent in the Koran. Is there such evidence? It must be understood that the Koran is a divine revelation, and as such all information in it is of divine origin. Allah revealed the Koran from Himself. It is the words of Allah, which existed before creation, and thus nothing can be added, subtracted or altered. In essence, the Koran existed and was complete before the creation of Prophet Mohamed, so it could not possibly contain any of the Prophet's own words or advice.

One cannot simply deny the Koran's authenticity without sufficient proof. The Koran offers something that is not offered by other religious scriptures. It is what scientists demand, a test of falsification. If you have a theory you should bring a way to prove whether you are wrong or not. This is exactly what the Koran has, falsification tests. Some are old, in that they have already been proven true, and some still exist today. A perfect example of how Islam provides man with a chance to verify its authenticity occurs in the verse in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter, which states,

*“Do they not consider the Koran? Had it been from any other than Allah, they would surely have found therein much discrepancy.”*

This is a clear challenge to non-Muslims. Basically, it invites them to find a mistake.

There is another interesting attitude that exists in the Koran, it informs the reader about different facts and then gives the advice; if you doubt what is said then ask those who have knowledge. There is also another attitude in the Koran, which is not found anywhere else. When it provides information it often tells the reader, *“You did not know this before.”* Indeed there is no scripture that exists which makes that claim. The Koran thus challenges the reader to research the information provided and verifies its authenticity (2). Many centuries before the onset of Mohamed Prophet-hood, there was a theory of atomism advanced by the Greek philosopher, Democritus. He and the people, who came after him, assumed that matter consists of tiny, indestructible, indivisible particles called atoms. The Arabs too, used to deal with the same concept. The Arabic word dharrah commonly refers to the smallest particle known to man. Now modern science has discovered that this smallest unit of matter, the atom, can split into its component parts. This is the development of the last century; yet interestingly enough, this information had already been documented in the Koran, which states:

*“He (Allah) is aware of an atom's weight in the heavens and on the earth and even anything smaller than that...”*

Indeed, this is proof that the Koran is not outdated.

A few years ago a group of men in Saudi Arabia collected all of the verses in the Koran which discuss embryology-the growth of human being in the womb. In essence they took the advice of the Koran: “Ask the men who know.” They chose a non-Muslim professor of embryology at the University

of Toronto. His name is Keith Moore, and he is a world expert on the subject. They invited him to Saudi Arabia and gave him all the help that he needed in translation and all of the cooperation for which he asked. And he was so surprised that he changed his textbooks. In the second edition of one of his books about the history of embryology, he included some material that was not in the first edition because of what he found in the Koran. This illustrates that the Koran was ahead of its time and that those who believe in the Koran know what other people do not know.

Dr. Keith Moore mentioned that some of the things that the Koran stated about the growth of the human being were not known until thirty years ago. The Koran's description of the human being as a "leech-like clot" at one stage was new to him, but when he checked on it, he found that it was true, and so he added it to his book. When Dr. Moore presented this information in Toronto, it caused quite a stir throughout Canada. A newspaper reporter asked Dr. Moore that maybe the Arabs might have known about these things by making crude dissections on their own-carved up people and examined these things. Dr. Moore immediately pointed out that the leech-like clot could only be seen through a microscope, and that 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 Koran of the appearance of the embryo are of the item when it is too small to see with the eye. When Dr. Moore was asked, "How do you explain this information in the Koran?" Dr. Moore's reply was, "It could only have been divinely revealed." (2).

The Koran only mentions one item dealing with medical treatment, and it is not in dispute by anyone. It states that in honey there is healing. And certainly, I do not think that there is anyone who will argue with that. In an article under the subject of the Koran, the Catholic church states, "Over the centuries, many theories have been offered as to the origin of the Koran... Today no sensible man accepts any of these theories."! Now here is The Old Catholic Church denying these futile attempts to explain away the Koran. Indeed the Koran is a problem for the Catholic Church because it states that it is a revelation, so they studied it. Certainly, they would like to find proof that it is not, but they cannot find one viable explanation. But at least they are honest in their search and do not accept the first unsubstantiated interpretation that comes along.

A leading intellectual in the Catholic Church by the name of Hans studied the Koran and gave his opinion of what he had read. After careful scrutiny he reported his findings, concluding, "Allah has spoken to man through the man, Mohamed." I do not think that the pope agrees with him, but

nonetheless the opinion of such reputed public figure must carry some weight in defense of the Muslim position.

If people are going to insist that the Koran is a deception, then they must bring forth evidence to support such a claim. The burden of proof is on them, not us.

One verse in the Koran reads:

*“Do not the unbelievers see that the heavens and the earth were joined together, then we clove them asunder, and made from water every living thing? Will they not then believe?”*

Ironically, this very information is exactly what they awarded the 1973 Noble Prize to non-Muslim's couple. The Koran reveals the origin of the universe-how it began from one piece-and mankind continues to verify this revelation even up to now. Additionally, the fact that all life originated from water would not have been an easy thing to convince people of fourteen centuries ago. Proof of that was not available until the invention of the microscope. They had to wait to find out that cytoplasm, the basic substance of the cell, is made up of 80% water.

The Koran mentions that the female bee leaves it home to gather food. In Shakespeare's play, Henry the Fourth, some of the characters discuss bees as male soldiers having a king. That is what people thought in Shakespeare's time, that the bees that one sees flying around are male bees and that they go home and answer to a king. As the Koran stated, the bees are females not males. Yet it took modern scientific investigations in the last 300 years to discover that this is the case.

The Koran also discusses the sun and the manner in which it travels through space. When the sun moves through space, there are two options: it can travel just as a stone would travel if one threw it, or it can move of its own accord. The Koran states the latter, that it moves as a result of its own motion. To do such, the Koran uses a form of the word sabaha to describe the sun's movement through space. In order to understand the implications of this Arabic verb the following example is given.

If a man is in water and the verb sabaha is applied in reference to his movement, it can be understood that he is swimming, moving of his own accord and not as a result of a direct force applied to him. Thus when this verb is used in reference to the sun's movement through space, it in no way implies that the sun is flying uncontrollably through space as a result of

being hurled or the like. It simply means that the sun is turning and rotating as it travels. This is what the Koran affirms, but was it an easy thing to discover? Only in modern times was the equipment made available to project the image of the sun on a tabletop so that one could look at it without being blinded. And through this process it was discovered that not only are there three spots on the sun but that these spots move once every 25 days. This movement is referred to as the rotation of the sun around its axis and conclusively proves that, as the Koran stated 1400 years ago, the sun does, indeed turn as it travels through space.

Seeing as back as fourteen centuries ago people probably did not understand much about time zones. The Koran's statements about this subject are considerably surprising. The concept that one family is having breakfast as the sun comes up while another family is enjoying the brisk night air is truly something to be marveled at, even in modern time.

In an interesting verse the Koran states that when history comes to an end and the Day of judgment arrives, it will all be occurring in an instant; and this very instant will catch some people in the daytime and some people at night. This clearly demonstrates Allah's divine wisdom and His previous knowledge of the existence of time zones, even though such a discovery was non-existent back fourteen centuries ago. Certainly, this phenomenon is not something that is obvious to one's eyes or a result of one's experience, and this fact, in itself, suffices as proof of the Koran's authenticity.

The French scientist Jacques Cousteau has discovered that the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean differ in terms of their chemical and biological constitution. Captain Cousteau conducted various undersea investigations at the Straits of Gibraltar in order to explain this phenomenon. He concluded that there is unexpected fresh water springs issue from the Southern and Northern coasts of the Gibraltar. These water sprouts gush forth toward each other at angle 45°, forming a reciprocal dam like the teeth of a comb. Due to this fact, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean cannot intermingle. Cousteau was amazed to know that the Koran has mentioned this fact more than 1400 years ago:

*He let forth the two seas that meet together,  
Between them a barrier they do not overpass (Ar Rahman, 19-20).*

The 89<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Koran mentions a certain city by the name of "Iram" (a city of pillars), which was not known in ancient history as far as historians were concerned. However, the 1978 edition of National Geographical

introduced interesting information, which mentioned that in 1973, the city of Elba was excavated in Syria. The city was discovered to be 43 centuries old. Researchers found in the library of Elba a record of all of the cities with which Elba had done business. There on the list was the name of the city Iram. The people of Elba had done business with the people of Iram (2). At no other time in history of Arabic language had the language ever achieved its highest potential than the time of Arabia during the 6<sup>th</sup> century - the time when the Koran was being revealed. The language reached its peak in richness, artistic value, and poetry during that time. With the Arabic language in its peak, and the best of Arabic writers, poets present in Arabia, it is impossible that non-Arabic speaking entity would write a book like the Koran and have such dynamite impact on the Arabs. So only an Arabic speaking entity could have written the Koran. With that in mind, we're left with three choices: 1) the Arabs wrote it. 2) Mohamed peace be upon him wrote it. 3) Allah the Almighty wrote it. Let's examine the three choices one by one.

Arabs wrote it?

What Koran teaches goes directly against the pagan Arab culture, religion, and gods, that existed before the Koran was revealed. The Koran condemns idol worshipping, but the Arabs loved their idol Gods, and worshipped them regularly. The Koran raised the status of women; the Arabs treated women next to animals. The Koran goes against most of the social habits such as backbiting, slandering, name calling etc, which the Arabs were heavily indulged into. The Koran condemns and prohibits usury whereas the Arabs freely levied heavy interest rates in loans and business. The Koran condemns and prohibits alcohol drinking, whereas the Arabs consumed alcohol freely. The Koran condemns and prohibits gambling, whereas the Arabs were some of the worst gamblers. How can the Arabs then write something that would negate their entire society's norms and ideologies?

The Prophet Mohamed was the only Arabian who first practiced, explained, and preached the Koran, and ended up making a lot of Arab tribes enemies. Any historian, Muslim or non-Muslim would argue that the only possible source of the Koran can be the Prophet Mohamed, the man responsible to recite it, teach it, and explain it to the people of Arabia. In fact, many historians today still think that only Mohamed could possibly have written it. This leads one to conclude that the Prophet Mohamed could possibly have written it, but did Mohamed actually wrote it?

First he was illiterate! How can an illiterate person come up with such a rich, poetic, intellectual and inspiring text that rocked the entire Arabia?

Mohamed being illiterate couldn't possibly have written something so

immaculate that it even exceeded the best of poetry, and literature in Arabic at the time of the language's peak development. Also, why would he write something going against almost the norms of the society, and lose his family, relatives, friends, and other loved ones, and not to mention all the wealth he lost.

Mohamed never went to school. No one taught him. He had no teacher of any kind in any subject. How can he have the knowledge of all the science; astronomy, oceanography, etc that is contained in the Koran?

The Koran was revealed over a period of 23 years, a very long time. Is it possible for someone to maintain the same exact style of Arabic speech, as demonstrated in the Koran, for over 23 years? It does not make sense that a man has two unique, distinguishable, and completely different styles of speech in public.

Also, what the Prophet Mohamed used to say is recorded in what we say Hadith (sayings) or Sunnah (sayings and deeds). If we look at the Arabic style of the Hadith and compare it with the style of the Koran, we can clearly see that they are totally different and distinguishable Arabic styles. The tone and style of Hadith differ completely from that of the Koran. The latter being the words of Allah is absolutely unique. The Holy Koran embodies a distinct form of eloquence and magnificence. The Koran is neither prose nor poetry; it is only the Koran and cannot be named otherwise. Evidently it is not poetry because it is not limited by the restriction of verification, and likewise it is not prose because it has its own conditions, not shared by other modes of expressions – like the commas at the ends of verses, and like the particular melody which dominates them.

The Holy Koran came down with more polished speech and more forceful style than the Hadith. In the versed of the Holy Koran the reader learns that Allah is Omnipotent, Just, Wise and Merciful. Allah's tone of speech, as evident in the Holy Koran, never gets weak even when it expresses a sense of mercy. On the other hand, the style of the Prophet's speech as seen in the Hadith is conversational and instructive. The reader of Hadith feels the presence of a person speaking in the presence of Allah. The Prophet spoke in public. This proves that the Prophet could never be the author of the Holy Koran. He is only a Messenger, whom Allah had granted the opportunity to explain to mankind through the Hadith the divine Message of the Holy Koran.

Allah said in His Koran,

*“Behold! The angels said: “O Mary! Allah has chosen you and purified you- Chosen you above the women of all nations.” (3, 42).*

Such an honor is not to be found given to Mary even in the Christian Bible! Why would the Prophet of Islam honor a woman from his opposition? A Jewess belonging to a race which had been looking down upon his people for three thousand years! Just as they still look down upon their Arab brethren today.

The Jews get their cock-eyed racism from their Holy Bible, where they are told their father, Abraham, had two wives, Sarah and Hagar. They say that they are the children of Abraham through Sarah, his legitimate wife, and that their Arab brethren have descended through Hagar, a concubine, and that as such, the Arabs are inferior breed.

Will anyone explain the anomaly as to why Mohamed chose this Jewess for such honor? The answer is simple. He had no choice. He had no right to speak of his own desire. As the Koran said:

*“It is no less than an inspiration sent down to him.” (53, 4).*

There is a chapter in the Holy Koran named in honor of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ peace be upon him (chapter Mary). Such an honor is not to be found given to Mary in the Christian bible. Out of the 66 books of the Protestants and 73 of the Roman Catholics, not one is named after Mary or her son. You will find books named after Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, Paul, but not a single one is that of Jesus or Mary!

If Mohamed was the author of the Holy Koran, then he would not have failed to include in it with the chapter of Mary- the mother of Jesus- his own mother Amena, or his dear wife Khadijah, or his beloved daughter Fatima. But no, this can never be. The Koran is not his handiwork, it is but a revelation revealed.

The Holy Koran predicted the destruction of the Persian Empire at the time when the later had a monumental victory over Rome. If the Prophet had written the Koran, then he would have put his future in jeopardy. Further, numerous details about many natural phenomena were detailed in the Koran and until recently, they were proven by experts to be amazingly accurate. Verses that give descriptions about the creation of the universe and the function of mountains in balancing earth and many other descriptions and explanations are available to be read and to be understood.



If the Prophet was the author, wouldn't he be prone to make weak inferences similar to those who claim that earth is square and whoever says otherwise be killed?

The Prophet also has demonstrated many supernatural miracles not by his own power, but by the power of the creator. He went to Jerusalem and came back in one night. In those days, it takes a month or so for a round trip. In another occasion, he provided water for an entire army from a small plate between his hands.

It is therefore reasonable to assume that the Koran is not the prophet creation. He had no way to predict all these events and to be right all the time.

That leaves us to the third option: Allah wrote it! Allah challenges his creation in the Koran:

*“And if you are in doubt as to what We have revealed to our servant, then produce a chapter like it; and call your helpers other than Allah, if your claims are true.”*

*“But if you cannot, and surely you cannot, then fear the fire whose fuel is men and stones, which is prepared for the unbelievers.” (2, 23-24).*

In the Koran there are parts that are meant to guide the Prophet himself, as well as reprimand him. If Mohamed had invented the Koran Allah wouldn't have spoken to him with clear reproach in certain instances. The idolaters and infidels of Mecca tried their best to tempt Mohamed to make concessions. They thought they almost seduced him to delete certain passages of the Koran, like the prostration in worship; the introduction of different passages which would honor their idols; forging new passages in Allah's name, and then they would have accepted the Mohamed as a close friend in their political and social circles. Had Allah not confirmed him he would have gone along with them up to a point, thinking that with making a small concession he would succeed in persuading them to embrace Islam. If Mohamed had done that Allah would have made him taste a double punishment in life and at death, and then he would have found none to help him against Allah. The words of reproach from Allah to Mohamed are clear evidence that the Koran is the Word of Allah descended upon Mohamed. The Koran said about this:

*Verily, they were about to tempt you away from that which We have revealed (Koran) to you, that you might forge against Us another, and then they would have surely taken you as a friend.*

*And had We not confirmed you, surely you would have inclined to them a little-*

*If you have done that, We would have let you taste a double chastisement in this life, and a double chastisement in the Hereafter; and then you would have found none to help you against Us (Al Isra, 73-75).*

*Had he invented against us any sayings,  
We would have seized him by the right hand,  
Then We would surely have cut his life-vein and not one of you could have withheld Us from him (Al Haqqah, 44-47).*

In another event the Prophet was conversing with one of the nobilities of his own tribe Quraish, talking him into adopting Islam. A blind man, already a Muslim walked in and interrupted the Prophet's conversation. This displeased Mohamed who frowned at the man. For the reversal of such attitude, Allah reproached Mohamed:

*He frowned and turned away;  
When there came to him a blind man;  
And how would you know? He might have sought to purify himself;  
Or he might have received admonition, and the admonition profits him?  
But to the one who shows that he is in no need of you,  
To him you give all attention;  
Yet it is no blame on you if he chooses to remain impure;  
But as to him who comes to you with eagerness;  
And with fear in his heart;  
To him you pay no heed. (Abasa, 1-10).*

Then Allah constructs Mohamed to make no distinction between rich and poor, strong and weak, men and women, young and old; it is a message to all:

*No indeed, it is a message;  
And whoso wills, shall remember it.  
It is (Koran) in records held in honor,  
Exalted (in dignity), purified,  
In the hands of scribes (angels),  
Honorable and obedient (Abasa, 11-16).*

One can wonder if the Prophet would have reprimanded himself!"

“How merciful Allah is to the sinners?” Jennifer asked suddenly. Omar replied, “This life is like a spider’s web - so beautiful, but a trap. Mankind has been created weak, impatient and restless. Sins might destroy man if he doesn’t believe in Allah and put his trust in Him. According to the Koran Allah’s mercy is so wide as to contain the sins of all the sinners. His providence and His blessings in the life of this world are not limited to those who submit to His commands. He is the provider for everyone, whether a person is faithful to Him or whether he rejects His call. He does not punish the sinners for their sins immediately but He gives them respite and times to correct their behavior. When a sinner turns to Him and asks His forgiveness with an honest heart and a sincere resolve to correction, He not only forgives his sins but also converts his bad deeds into good ones. When a person calls Him with a sincere and an honest heart and asks for His guidance, He opens the doors of his guidance for such a person. We must have trust in His concern for us, and His ability to help us. Allah loves those who put their trust in Him. Allah said in His Koran:

*“When my servants ask you concerning Me, I Am indeed close (to them): I respond to the prayer of every supplicant when he calls on me: Let them also, with a will, listen to my call, and believe in Me: that they may walk in the right way.” (al Baqarah, 186).*

The words of Allah penetrated deep into Jennifer’s heart. It made her think deeply about her life. She is highly educated and well off. She has everything she needs. But what is she truly doing with her life right now? Earning money and satisfying her physical need! Something deep inside her was missing. What was it exactly, to feel whole? She is living an unlawful life with a man who would shout at her face if she ever raised the subject of marriage again. How many times she tried to convince Walker to accept marriage as a better lifestyle but he always refused. Because she loved Walker and didn’t want to lose him, she reluctantly refrained from raising the subject of marriage again. But now she feels stronger than before. Now she feels that her body is so precious that it should be offered only to the man who deserves it - a man who would accept the responsibility of a home, a wife and a family. There is something else more important. She needed forgiveness, and this could be achieved by being lawfully attached to a man by marriage. She also needed guidance, and Omar guided her to the true role decreed for women by Allah, the role of a good mother. A role she knew perfectly well as a woman, but she just let it fade away.

The many conversations she had with Omar about marriage made her feel that she sinned terribly against the laws of Allah, so a peace and a reckoning must be made with Allah before there can be a healing. Living in a peaceful home with a legitimate husband would make her wish come true. Omar awakened her on the fact that her role in life is not yet fulfilled, has not even started. She wants to exercise motherhood and carries her own baby in her arms. Every woman must have a baby. No woman can realize her full potential until she had given birth. Omar made her feel that she was living an abortive life. How can that be and she could populate this house and fill it with kids.

“Omar, there is a secret I want to share with you, but please be understanding and don’t be angry with me.” Jennifer said hesitantly with signs of embarrassment covering her face.

“How could I be angry with you and I haven’t seen from you but kindness and generosity.” Omar said smiling.

“I and Walker live together under the same roof without marriage. It’s a liberal way of life now common in our society. I hope you will understand.”

“What? You mean you and Walker are not married!” Omar shouted with a shock.

He kept silent for a moment to digest what he had just heard. He then said, “I am truly sorry for you Jennifer. You are just a nice lady, and you can do with your life better than that. It is your right to live the decent life of purity and giving, the life of motherhood. Don’t waste your life running after the illusion of modern lifestyles for they are the road to perdition.”

Jennifer swallowed the lump of tears that had formed in her throat and said with apparent sadness showing in her eyes, “Omar, I consider you more than a brother. You are my savior. I want to relief my soul by telling you another secret tormenting my conscious for over two months now. I am pregnant.”

Omar was overwhelmingly distracted. Confusion and embarrassment showed on his face.

“I don’t know what to say Jennifer except that if your will to reform were sincere, Allah will enable you to change your life to what He thinks is best for you. No matter how great the sins of human beings may be, Allah can forgive them if you turn back to Him in sincere repentance. The Prophet peace be upon him informed his followers of this reality:

*“If you did not commit sins and turn to Allah, seeking His forgiveness, He would have replaced you with another people who would sin then ask Allah’s forgiveness and He would forgive them.”*

Every one of the 114 chapters of the Koran except one begins with the prayer, *“In the name of Allah, the Beneficent the Most Merciful”*.

The Prophet was also reported to have said:

*“Allah created mercy with one hundred parts, one of which was sent down upon the Jinn, human beings and other living beings. It is out of this one part that they love each other, show kindness to each other and even the animals treat their offspring with affection. Allah has reserved the remaining ninety-nine parts for His true worshippers on the Day of Resurrection.”*

The Prophet of Islam commented on Allah’s mercy by saying,

*“When Allah decreed the creation He pledged Himself by writing in His book which is laid down with Him: ‘My mercy prevails over my wrath.’”*

The Prophet also stated that Allah has said:

*“I am as my servant thinks I am. I am with him when he makes mention of Me. If he makes mention of Me to himself, I make mention of him to myself; and if he makes mention of me in an assembly, I make mention of him in an assembly better than it. And if he draws near to Me a hand’s span, I draw near to him an arm’s length; and if he draws near to Me an arm’s length, I draw near to him a fathom’s length. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him with speed.”*

Had Allah wished, He could have created mankind like angels, incapable of committing sin. But that was not His wish. Human beings were created capable of making mistakes and when they realize their errors and seek Allah’s forgiveness, the divine attributes of mercy and forgiveness become manifest.

People will not enter paradise solely based on their good deeds. It is the grace of Allah, which will ultimately carry them there. The Prophet said in this regard:

*“Try your best to do right, and be happy. For none will enter paradise only because of his deeds.”*

His companions said, “O Messenger of Allah! Not even you?”

He replied, *“Not even me, unless Allah envelops me in His mercy and grace. And bear in mind that the deed most loved by Allah is the one done constantly, even though it is small.”*

However, Allah’s grace is not arbitrary. It is based on both correct faith and righteous deeds. In the Koran Allah says:

*“Whoever brings a good deed, will have (the value of) ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed will only be punished with one like it, and they will not be wronged.”*

If Allah were to judge the deeds of humankind strictly, no one’s good deeds would outweigh their evil deeds. So Allah has manifested His grace by multiplying the value of good deeds, while keeping evil deeds at their face value. It is by the grace of Allah that the true believers enter paradise. This does not mean that deeds have no role. Deeds have a major role, but they are not the deciding factor. Allah’s grace outweighs them.”

Jennifer pleaded desperately, “You mean Allah will forgive me?”

Omar recited to her the koranic verses:

*Say, “O my servants who have transgressed against themselves do not despair of Allah’s Mercy; surely Allah forgives sins altogether; verily, He is the All-forgiving, the All- Compassionate (Az Zumar, 53).”*

Jennifer and Omar kept silent for long moments. Omar asked Jennifer tenderly,

“Would you allow me Jennifer to stay in a motel for the rest of my days in America? Please try to understand. We Muslims are not allowed to stay close to wine, gambling and, and...” Omar held his tongue, he just couldn’t continue.

“I perfectly understand Omar. If this will be better for you so it’s okay with me. You have been a sweet soul, filled with the strength of gentleness and love. You have made my house a much more beautiful place simply by being in it.”

“I will pack today if you don’t mind.” He said trying hard not to offend her. She couldn’t utter a word, but nodded approvingly with tears in her eyes.



