



**CONTRIBUTION OF DR AISHA BINT SHADI TO QURANIC
SCIENCE, (CASE STUDY AL IJAAZ ALBAYANI FI QUR'ANIL
KARIM WA MASA'IL IBN AZRAAQ)**

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Abstract

The study attempt to shed light on the miraculous nature of the Qur'an and show the effort of Dr Aisha Bint Shadi in expressing it. To shed light on the capability that women have to undertake high intellectual activities. The research study the book with inquisitiveness and study the method adopted by the writer in her book. The key ideas were extracted and presented. They paper found out that she wrote the book after being acquainted with the book of Allah for about one-third of a century and the content was mostly a compilation of her lectures and presentation. It is found that she made distinction between Ijaaz and Tahaddi, she discusses different faces of the miraculous nature of the Qur'an; Sarafatu, uniqueness of laws, predictions of what to occurs later and on Balaga (Succinctness). It is also found that she discusses her view on the miracle in the Disioined letters and on Secret of words in the Qur'an. Masa'il In Izraq which also form part of the book was not discussed on this presentation. The paper concludes with summary of the study.

Keywords: *Qur'an, Ijaaz, Miracle, Tahaddi*

Introduction

Miracle (Ijaaz) comes from 'a-j-z', which means 'to be incapable of, to be weak'. Mu'jizah are defined to be acts performed by Prophets of miraculous nature that humans are incapable of imitation. Example the transformation of the staff of Musa into a serpent.

Allah, the Almighty, sends prophets and messengers, and He strengthen their missions with miracles which the Qur'an refers to as 'ayah' as it was mentioned in the Qur'an (3:49). Prophet Musa was given the staff, which turned into a snake, and also his hand shone as light with no ailment. Prophet Isah healed, who was born blind and leper and brought the dead to life by Allah's Leave. (Ibn Kathir 2000)

The greatest miracle of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) is the Qur'an. He was given this miracle as the ultimate proof of his Prophethood.

Qadhi Yasir (1999) quote Ibn Kaldum (d. 808), states in his muqaddama, " know that the greatest of all miracles, is the Qur'an that was revealed to the Prophet (Peace be upon him). Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728) wrote in Majmu al fataawa " The greatest (of all miracles) is the Qur'an that the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) come with. The Arabs were proud because of their eloquence in speech, the beauty and succinctness of their language. They composed lengthy poems, competed in verse-making, and obtained distinction and honour. (A. Rahim 2001). Allah revealed Qur'an sufficient itself as a miracle. The Almighty challenged the Arabs to produce something similar to it, but they were unable to produce even one verse. The Qur'an is a permanent miracle for all times. To shed light on some of the faces of the miraculous nature of the Quran, the book of Dr. Aisha Bint Shadi was chosen for this research to bringout some of her contributions to Qur'anic science.

Statement of the Problem

Miracles I(jaaz) are something that humans and jinn are incapable of attaining or doing. The Qur'an is the best miracle given of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). But not many Muslims investigate to find out the many ways in which the miraculous nature of the Qur'an can be understood. The miracle of the Qur'an can be understood from many faces; in its words, phrases, sentences, also in its style, its arrangement, its chapters, its syntax, its sentence constructions, its alphabets and from many faces. These facts show the apparent need for scholars, researchers, and inquisitors to conduct thorough research to bring this before the Muslim community. Because attaining that would increase their God consciousness and enhance their knowledge. Dr Aisha Bint Shadi tries to bring these out in a unique way pioneered by her and a different style in her book "Izajul Bayani fil Qur'anic Azim." It is hoped that this study will shed more light on the topic so that those who are not well aware of the many faces of Ijaaz can have additional knowledge from the contributions of Dr Aisha in her book.

Aims of the study

To shed light on the miraculous nature of the Qur'an and show the effort of Dr Aisha Bint Shadi in expressing it in a unique way.

To shed light on the capability that women have in undertaking high intellectual activities when they receive the required training and encouragement.

Meaning of Ijaaz

Literal meaning of Ijaaz: The word Ijaaz comes from a-j-z jal which means incapable of, to be weak, to be tried, to lack power.

Technically Izaaz or Mu'ujizah is an act that differs what is known, a challenge, something that weakens the efforts of individuals and collective people as they try to emulate it. Allah the most high bestows it upon the prophets as a sign and use to strengthen their mission.

Meaning of Tahaddi

Tahaddi is understood from the verses of Tahaddi in the Qur'an where the unbelievers whether Arabs or non-Arabs, Human or Jinns, were challenged to bring forth the similarly of the Quran, ten chapter of it or even a chapter of it or its similarity. The challenge started in Mecca and continued in Medina.

Life History of Aisha Bint Shadi

Her name was Aisha Abdurrahman, she was born in 1912AD in the city of (Damiyad) in Egypt, she was popularly known as Bint Shadi because of the sea of Shadi in Damiyad. Her father used to take her with him whenever he traveled to the library of Bahar University and in the year 1920 she requested her father to take her to a formal school but he refused and said female children do not go to school to learn, they learn at home. When her grandfather Muhammad Damhujjiy came she lamented her story to him and he urged her father to take her to a school.

Her Educational Pursuit and Career as a Lecturer

She finished her Rafiyya School and then enrolled into the Teachers College/School in Bidandan. She obtained her certificate in Arabic Language from the University of Arabia in 1939AD; she worked with the College of Shariah at Al-Kuruyiyin University Magrib Arabi as a lecturer of Tafsir, and a lecturer of Languages at University of Shamsh from the year 1962 – 1972AD.

Her Publications

1. Tafsir Bayani Lil Qur' anil Karim (in two volumes).
2. Ijaaz al-bayani lil Qur'anil Karim wa masa' il ibn Izraq.
3. Al-Qur' an wa Kadhaya-i-Insan.
4. Taraajim Sayyidat Baaitul Nubuwati (five volumes).
5. Tarasinan bayna madhi wa kaadir.
6. Luggatuna wal hayatu.

And many other publications.

Reasons for writing the Book

Dr Aisha wrote the book on Ijaaz, after being with the book of Miracle of the Qur'an, throughout her life. It was the field she specialized on and obtained her postgraduate degrees. She spent one-third (1/3) of a decade studying, writing and impacting knowledge on the Miraculous Book. That gave her the ability to be acquainted to some degree with this great knowledge.

The chance she got to have conducted researches on the Sciences of Qur'an, lead Dr Aisha to gather information about the stand of the Arabs on the miraculous nature of the Qur'an. She puts all efforts trying to understand why the Arabs were incapable of producing a chapter similar to Qur'an, even though the Quran challenged them and Arabic is the language of the Qur'an and also their language?

Based on this Dr Aisha decided to write this great book. She said if not for her relationship with scholars she would not have chosen the difficult topic like this, if not for her knowledge about the esteem position of women in history, she would not have present this. The book was a compilation of lectures and seminars she presented at various occasions and different destinations. Dr Aisha died in December, 1998AD may Allah forgive her shortcomings.

Difference between Ijaaz and Tahaddi as explained by Dr Aisha

The miraculous nature of the Qur'an became known to the Arabs at the onset of the revelation they became certain that the style of the Qur'an is beyond the composition and ability of any Arab. As a result, they tried all possible measures to see that people who came to Mecca for Pilgrimage do not meet the prophet (peace be upon him). They called the Qur'an with all sort of names and said it is a Magic which separates parents from their children and set families apart.

Dr Aisha said but when the miracle verses of the Qur'an reached the hearing of those who hate Islam the most, they believe in its words for she gave example of the Islamization of Umar. And also narration on Zubayr Bn Mud'am Bn Adi who went to the prophet when he was reciting Sura Al Dur, when the prophet recites. Allah says

"Verily the chastisement of thy lord will indeed come to pass, there is none can avert it. (Dur: 7-8)

He went saying I feared that the punishment may reach me.

Tahaddi the Challenge

When the prophet (Peace be Upon Him) recited his highest miracle the Qur'an to his people the Arabs, some believed and others remain in disbelieve. The Arabs never doubt the sublime

characters of the prophet (peace be upon him) as a result. they nicknamed him Al-Amin the trustworthy. But with regard to what he called them to leave their religion and believe in the oneness of the Lord, they raise an alarm and a hot debate on the miracles of the prophet hood.

They described the Qur'an as, poetry, magic, fortune telling, while deep inside them, they believed that they have never come across anything like it in the past, and it is nothing close to the words of humans. On this note the Quran spoke back challenging them in the middle of Meccan years.

Dr Aisha wrote that the first verse revealed on this is the verse in

Suratul Isra'i revealed in Mecca, which is refuting those who contemplate on the prophet hood of the messenger of Allah because he is human. Allah says

“Say if the whole of mankind and Jinns were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other with help and support” (Isra'i: 88)

The challenge in Sura Isra'i is misli hazal Qur'an afterwards the Qur'an throws another challenge in Sura Yunus, challenging them to bring forth the similar of this Qur'an and to call whom they were able to call beside Allah. Allah says

“Or do they say, he forged it? Say bring them sura like unto it, and call (to your aid) anyone you can, beside Allah, if it be Ye speak the truth”.

After the challenge in Sura Yunus which is on 'a chapter' the Arabs were unable to produce it and they are also humans like the prophet (peace be upon him) hence another verse challenged them in;

As Allah destined, they couldn't produce a narration similar to the Qur'an although, its language is also their own. So another challenged them in Sura Dur. Allah says

“Or do they say a poet: we wait for him some calamity (hatched) by time. Say tho awaits ye, I too will wait along with you. Is it that their intellects urge them, to this or are they but a people transgressing beyond bounds or do thy say, he fabricated the (message). Nay, they have no faith, let them then produce a saying like unto it if (it be) thy speaks the truth. (Dur: 30-34)

All the above verses were revealed before Hijra as Dr Aisha wrote: on challenge only one verse was revealed at Medina and the challenge in it; Allah says

“And if ye are in doubt as what we have revealed from time to time to our servant then produce a sura like thereunto. And call your witnesses or helpers (if there are any) besides Allah if ye are

truthfull. But if ye cannot and of surely ye cannot then fear the fire whose fuel is Men and Stone which is prepared for those who reject faith”.

As such Dr Aisha explained miracle and all challenge in her book [jaaz al bayani. The Qur'an challenged the Arabs to bring forth the like of it but, they were incapable of that, and the miraculous nature of Quran became clear to the arabs from the unset of revelation.

The Difference between Ijaaz and Tahaddi

Dr Aisha wrote that the miraculous nature of the Quran, was there for all to see at the onset of the revelation, and it made a superb impact on Arabs with Arabs background, when the prophet recite the Quran among them, it was not assumed that only the Balagi'yun could comprehend it, because its miracle is easy to comprehend. Therefore Quran is not specifically for certain people but to the generality of them.

But Dr Aisha wrote that in case of Tahaddi the Arabs were challenged to produce a chapter like the Quran, and this is exclusively thrown to the most famous among their Balagi'yun and their accomplish from the Jinns. They were challenged because they called the Quran with all sort of names quoted above.

Dr Aisha wrote that Bakinlani also share this view on difference between Ijaaz and Tahaddi.

Faces of Ijaaz as it was Explained by Dr Aisha Bint Shadi

i. Ijaaz on Sarfatu "aversion" and its Kind.

The mutazilite held this view and their scholar talk a lot on this, among them Abu Ishaq al Nadham. Abdul Jabbar Mutazili said "he did not share this view."

According to Nadhaam the Quran was capable of being imitated, but when a person tried to do so Allah would prevent him and take away his capabilities and powers.

In the book of Ijaaz it was explained that "had God Almighty sent a prophet in the fast, and his miracle was to turn his hands or his legs. Then when he is in between his people and they asked him about his sign of prophet hood. He turns his hand and legs and said you could not do that, they tried and they could not because they were created on that nature, so his action would consequently serve as a miracle. It was explained that miracle does not refer to the greatness of the evidence a prophet came with, but in what is inimitable a non-normal.

ii. Ijaaz on the uniqueness of its laws the fact that it came from a person who do not know how to read and write, had emphasizes its miraculous nature.

Dr Aisha wrote that in commenting on this face of Ijaaz. Al Khaddabi said "As I know that it is regarded as miracle for the eloquence of its verses, the deep meaning that are present in it

its command to be obedient, its elaboration on the rituals, the permitted, the prohibited, the disliked, and its emphasizes for the prohibition of vices and promoting Good deeds, its call for the practice of standard moral conducts, you can never find its equal it include everything in it an inclusions that you cannot find what supersede it."

iii. Ijaaz on the predictions of that which would occur, as the Quran stated severally which later came true. Narrations that are the knowledge of the unknown (Gaib).

This is one of the faces of the miracles of the Quran.

Nadhaam al Mutazili scholar says *the surprising and miraculous nature in the Our'an is what it has of narrations about the unseen unknown"

Dr Aisha wrote that Khaddabi said "some claimed that the miracle is in the stories of event to occur in near future, like the saying of Allah in begging of Sura Rum. He said this and other narration are part of the miracle of the Our' an but is not a case in all chapters, but each chapter had been made miracle of its own.

Qadi Abdul Jabbar said Those who were saying the Prophet (Peace be upon him) challenged the Arabs after he narrated stories about what to occur in the past, is wrong because he challenged them to produce any Sura without specification (of future occurrence) really he challenged them with Qur'an in its eloquence in style not what they claimed."

Dr Aisha said "she agreed with him because majority of the companions the Sabiqunal Awwalin accepted Islam after the 1st revelation without waiting for events to be mentioned then occurs. In reality this confirms the miraculous nature of the Quran.

Dr Aisha continued that "they know that in Taura and Injil there were history of past generation and their Prophets from the creation of Adam, and it might even be more elaborated but nobody said the revealed books are miracles of their Prophets and it did not reach us that prophet Isah or Prophet Musa had challenged their people to produce something like the Taura or Injil.

Here it is clear that the Our' an really made a stand with the Arabs. For their being popular in excellent in speech and prose they were in the best position to comprehend the miracle of the Our' an.

iv. Ijaaz Balaji (succinctness miracles)

The earlier books written on Ijaaz from different Mazahibs are on difference opinions base on what they understand about Ijaaz, the Ijaaz on which they do not differ is the Ijaaz Al Balagi.

Dr Aisha wrote that Zamakshari, Al Haddabi, Bakillani, Mutafili, Sunni and Ashari respectively all wrote on this face of Ijaaz.

Zamakshari said there is no way for the understanding of the miraculous nature of the Qur'an without the knowledge of Ilmu-Al Bayan and Maami.

Ibn Shinan Al-Khaffayiy emphasizes in his introduction of his book (Sirrul Fasaha) that there is no way for a research on the miraculous nature of the Qur'an but to know the secret of the eloquence (Alfasahat) and succinctness (Balaga) of the Qur'an (Shadi: 84).

View of Dr Aisha Bint Shadi on Ijaaz disjoined letters

Bint Shadi choose to talk on the miracles of the disjoined letters at the beginning of chapters (Huruf Muqaddiaat) Twenty-six Mecca chapters began with disjoined letters and three Medinite chapters began with them.

The Meccan chapters are: Alkalam, Al' Aaraf, Maryam, Al Shu'ara'I, Namli, Kisas, Yunus, Hud, Yusuf and Hijr, Lukman, Gaafir, Fussilat, Az-zukhruf and Dukkan and Jashiyyah and Ahkaf, brahim, Al Sajadat, Rum and Ankabut.

The Medinite chapters: Bagra, Al-i-Imran and Raad.

Dr Aisha said she has ten words with regard to the beginning of chapters of the Qur'an.

The disjoined letters were : Glorification, a call, a statement, an oath, a condition, a command, a question, an invocation, a reason or cause.

The Salaf as Dr Aisha wrote said that all these alphabet without repetition are 14 in number, and that is half of the Arabic alphabets.

Some said the alphabets are letter with which you write the Asmaullahil-A'azam, and Dr Aisha said it was reported that Sa'ad bn Zubayr said "they are the names of Allah (SWT) disjoined."

Some said they are names of the Angels or Messengers of Allah' and some said they were the beginning of the 99 names of Allah. Kaf from Al Kareen, Al Kabir, Ha'i from Hadi, Ain from Alim, Aziz and Sad from Samad, Ra'i from Ar-rahman.

Abu Hayyan as Dr Aisha wrote said "I held the view that the disjointed alphabets are the ambiguous matters whose knowledge is exclusively to Allah" Shu'abi, Thauri and some scholars from Muhaddisun said it is from the ambiguous matters exclusively known to Allah, and we must not discuss rather believe in it as it is. Dr Aisha wrote that some scholars said we must discuss the issue and bring out meaning out of it.

Dr Aisha summarizes and forwards these points among other as what she understood about the disjointed alphabets.

1. In all the chapters that began with these disjointed letters there is expostulation that the Quran was revealed from Allah and most of the Sura discusses the behavior of the people of the past who disbelieved and were punished.

2. Most of the chapters that began with the disjointed letter you find them disputing the claims of the unbelievers who describe the Our'an as magic, poetry and future telling in them Allah challenged them and their accomplish the Jinns to produce something similar to the Verses.

She wrote that the alphabets when you read them independently they would not give meaning, but as they take their position in the Qur'an their secret manifest and they became a miracle.

Her discussions on Secret of the words

Dr Aisha brought the following forward after working on it for a long period of time; in the course of researcher she conducted in her effort to specialize in the science of Our'an.

She said the Our'an use words in its meaning, in a way that one cannot replace it with another, because it cannot match.

Ar-ru'uya Wa al-Hilm

In the verse in chapter Yusuf 43-44

Can the Arabs whom the Quran challenged to make a sentence in different way apart from this one?
Like to say

The Ru'uya appears several times in the Qur'an, Dr Aisha said, and the Our'an use Al Hilm if the vision is not true.

Anasa, Absara

In Arabia, Dr Aisha wrote Anasa means seeing and hearing, voice

Ista'anasa means seeking permission so when Qur'an says.. Anasa Naran it is perfect then to say Absaraha aw Unzurha aw Ashhadha or words similar to this that has the same meaning with the word Anasa.

One cannot say about something until he had attained the seeing or hearing, when Arab says Anastu they had seen and heard.

But the Quran use the word Anasa five times and four of which refers to fire, which Prophet Musa saw as in Sura Daha and Alqisas: 29. But in Sura Nasa'i Anasa is used referring to another meaning.

Zawj Wa Imra'ah

Dr Aisha wrote that we understand that the Quran use the word Zawj in

Baqara: 35 Aaraf: 19 and Daha:118 while the words Imra'atun is used as in Imraatu Firauna, Imraatu Aziz, Imraatu Nuh, Imraatu Lud. This is the language of the Quran you can't say Zauju Aziz instead of Imraatu Aziz or Imraatu Adam instead of Zauju Adam this is what explain the miracle in it.

Dr Aisha wrote that this gave us the knowledge of the secret of the words because of the relationship between Prophet Adam and his wife, is that of a wife and husband, she is not a wife among other wives, but she is the only wife.

In verse of Shari' ah rulings the laws came with the word Al Azwaaj Or AZ Zawj of the marriage is intact and in the Iddah of those whose husbands died as in Baqara: 24 but when the spouses were separated by means of divorce or Ila'i so the Shari'ah ruling came with the word Al Nisa'i not AZ Zawj as in Dalaq: 1 and Bagara: 236.

Findings of the study

The study found out that their is a difference between Ijaaz and Tahaddi

The study found out about different faces of Ijaaz; in Sarafatu, forecasting the future and on succinctness (Balaga)

The study found out the secret in the miraculous Qur'anic usage of certain words.

The research found out about the miracle of the disjointed letters.

Contribution to knowledge

It brings out the miracle in the Qur'anic usage of Arabic words and alphabets

It will encourage resources persons to write on similar issues

It gives a hint that manuscripts can be transformed into resource books

Conclusion

The presentation above is some of the contributions of Dr Aisha Bint Shadi in her book *Ijaaz Al Bayani Fil Our' an*. In which she discusses the miracle and the challenge, the faces of miraculous nature of Quran, like aversion, prediction of events to occur, on uniqueness of its laws and its Balaga she also discusses her view on the miracle of the Our'an like the disjoined letters and the secrete of the worlds.

As a linguist and a lecturer her style is commendable, she explain everything in detail and clearly. Example on the challenge Tahaddi she brought forward the verses on Tahaddi she explain their gradual revelation and the challenge in each verse, then views of scholars on the challenge.

As a researcher in the science of Our'an when discussing an issue she would write almost everything about it. Example the disjoined alphabets at the beginning of chapters, she named the chapters in which the letters appear, and discuss the view of scholars, her predecessors, then her view.

In her style she quoted the views of scholars from different sects and Mazahib of Sunni, Asha'irah, Mutazilites, Mutakallimun, she quoted Bakillani, Qa'di Abdul Jabbar, Zamakshari Al-Haddabi and others, she sometimes prove or disprove a 'view and many a time says her own opinion.

The book is a great reference of its own and it is the first of its kind.

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