



## Analysis of Al-Manar's View on the Miracles of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

Ali Qazanfari<sup>1</sup>; Abdullah Mir Ahmadi<sup>2</sup>; Zahra Modarresi Rad<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Quranic and Hadith Sciences, Tehran, Iran

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Quranic and Hadith Sciences, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

<sup>3</sup> Level 4th Student of Rafiah Al-Mustafa Educational Institute, Tehran, Iran

Corresponding Author: Zahra Modarresi Rad (modaresi114@gmail.com)

<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v8i10.3105>

### **Abstract**

Al-Manar is a socio-rational interpretation of the Holy Qur'an, and Abduh is one of the modernist Qur'an interpreters and one of the founders of the reform movement, whose views on Al-Manar interpretation have been partially reflected by his pupil Rashid Rida. According to him, the gradual growth of the people's intellect and the lack of impact of extraordinary events on the public's faith made the only miracle of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) i.e. the Holy Qur'an, to become rational, thus, there was no need for another miracle. Abduh and Rashid Rida, despite acknowledging the occurrence of extraordinary events, have interpreted the verses regarding the miracles of the Seal of the prophets (PBUH) so as not to interpret the verses as expressing a supernatural event. While the verses of the Qur'an indicate the occurrence of many miracles by the Messenger of God (PBUH), and other miracles of the Prophet do not contradict the immortality and rationality of the miracle of the Qur'an. In addition, the occurrence of miracles by the divine prophets is a part of the Divine Tradition. Al-Manar's pioneering role in socio-rational interpretation and proposing new ideas about miracles have led this article to study Al-Manar's view on the miracles of the Last Prophet (PBUH) by analyzing its view through the verses on the destruction of the Elephant Companions, Splitting of the Moon and the miracle of the Qur'an, as well as criticizing and examining its influence on the other scholars.

**Keywords:** *Abduh, Rashid Rida; Al-Manar; Destruction of the Elephant Companions; Splitting of the Moon; The Miracle of the Qur'an*

### **Introduction**

Abduh's opinion on the miracles of the Last Prophet (PBUH) has not been examined in a separate book. However, some authors in their research have referred to Abduh's interpretation speaking of the miracle of the Elephant Companions destruction and the denial of the miracle of the Splitting of the Moon, such as: Aql in the "*Al-Ittijahat al-Aqlaniya al-Haditha*", Abdu'l Jabbar in "*Qissatu'l Adab fi'l Hijaz*", Sayyid Qutb in "*Fi Zilal al-Quran*", Abd al-Qadir in "*Tafsir wa al-Mufsirun fi al-Asr al-Hadith*", Muhtasib in "*Ittijahaat al-Tafsir fi al-Asr al-Rahin*", Al Rumi in "*Manhaj al-Madrassa Al-Aqliyya al-Haditha fi al-Tafsir*", Al Zahabi in "*Al-Tafsir wa al-Mufsirun*", Khamis al-Ghareeb in "*Muwazana bayn*

*Manhajay Madrasa al-Manar and Madrasa Al-Umanaa fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*" and Sabri in "*Mawqif al-Aql wa'l Ilm wa'l Alim min Rabbi'l Alamin wa Ibadhi'l Mursalin*".

The above-mentioned authors have briefly disapproved Abduh's opinion about the destruction of the Elephant Companions and the Splitting of the Moon.

### **Conceptology**

Before the discussion, it is necessary to explain the vocabulary required during the research.

**1- Abduh:** Sheikh Mohammad Abduh, as one of the Ash'arite scholars of the Holy Qur'an, is a rationalist commentator and a pioneer in interrogating the Quran in order to meet the needs of society. Abduh's view stems from his personality and intellectual backgrounds about the compatibility of the Qur'an and scientific facts, the need for social reform, the struggle against emulation and the need for *ijtihad*, his intellectual orientation in interpretive discussions, his particular opinion on the Qur'anic stories and the avoidance of explaining the uncertain verses of the Qur'an, as well as incredibility of interpretive hadiths which were influenced by the factor of time.

**2- Rashid Rida:** Rashid Rida was one of Abduh's pupils who collected Abduh's interpretive lessons with his method and attitude in *Al-Manar* interpretation. Abduh calls Rashid Rida as the translator of his thoughts with the phrase "*Sahib al-Manar tarjuman 'i afkaari*". (Rashid Rida, 1414, vol. 2, p. 498)

**3- Al-Manar:** The interpretation of *Al-Manar* as "the most significant current of socio-intellectual interpretation" in terms of interpretive method, by emphasizing the role of intellect and its preference, relies on narrative texts and in terms of interpretive orientation, it basically focuses on society and search for solutions to the social problems through the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. (As'adi, 2018, p. 7)

Rashid Rida wrote down Abduh's interpretive points of view, up to verse 125 of Surah An-Nisa, and he composed them with the help of the intellectual reserves he had learned from his master's lessons. He usually mentions Abduh's interpretive views as "*Qala'l Ustaz*" [The Master Said].

**4- Miracles:** Miracle is an extraordinary phenomenon performed by a claimant of prophecy to prove the validity of his claim, and it is accompanied by challenge, it is not teachable, it is compatible with the law of Cause and Effect and it happens in possible matters. (See *Khoei*, No date, vol. 1, p. 27; Makarem Shirazi, 2007, vol. 7, p. 280; Taftazani, 1409, vol. 5, p. 11) In the Qur'an, many verses describe the miracles of the divine prophets.

### **Introduction**

Abduh, due to the requirements of his time and in response to the criticisms and doubts of the Orientalists, has expressed a special view on the miracle. His commentary on the rational miracle of the Qur'an among the other miracles of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) as an attempt to normalize the rest of the miracles of the Holy Prophet and their scientific explanation and interpretation, has been effective in the view of some scholars, which doubles the importance of this research.

The Holy Quran is a great and eternal miracle of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), in which, his other miracles also have been narrated. This article deals with Abduh's opinion on the following verses about the destruction of the Elephant Companions, Splitting of the Moon and the miracle of the Qur'an, and indicates the impact of his opinion on the later commentators.

### ***1- The Elephant Companions Destruction***

Surah Al-Fil tells the story of the king of Abyssinia who moved to Mecca with many elephants to destroy the Ka'ba, but they were destroyed by divine torment near Mecca. The Qur'an says: "*Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the Companions of the Elephant? Did He not make their plot go astray? And He sent against them birds of Ababil; striking them with stones of Sijil (baked clay). And He made them like stalks eaten up (by cattle).*" (Al-Fil: 1-5)

Abduh believes that the Elephant Companions and the army of Abrahah were destroyed by the disease such as measles and smallpox, and believes that the "*Ababils*" were small insects that transmitted the germs of the disease of measles and cholera to the Corps of Abrahah and, in a short time, caused their flesh eaten up from the severity of the disease. (Amara, 1414 AH, vol. 5, p. 505)

He writes that there are many reports that the Abyssinian king wanted to destroy the Ka'ba so that the Arabs would not perform the pilgrimage around it. His army reached an area called Mughammas near Mecca with many elephants. There, smallpox (narrated by Ikrimah and Ya'qub ibn Utbah) and measles spread among the Abyssinian soldiers and reached the Abyssinian commander. His flesh was cut into pieces and his chest was torn up, then he died in San'a. The commentator considers this amount of events to be agreed upon and correct. (Ibid)

According to Abduh, the chapter of Al-Fil states that the disease arose and spread from dry pebbles had been thrown upon the army by a large flock of birds. Birds that God sent with the wind and can be considered as mosquitoes or flies infected with the germs of some diseases. The wind stuck the dry and polluted mud in the shape of pebbles to the feet of those small creatures, and then by landing on the bodies of Abrahah's soldiers a disease was created and caused their flesh to fall off. These weak birds, now called germs, were among the greatest divine soldiers which wiped out the invaders [of Ka'ba]. This incident indicates the greatness and power of God, and any other interpretation is unacceptable, even if there was an interpretation that had come from an authentic narration, then it must be interpreted in other way. (Ibid)

In justifying Abduh's words, Mohammad Amara says that when Abduh speaks of the birds of *Ababil*, he does not seek to deny the miracle, but only wants to bring it closer to the materialistic and positivistic human mind that such events are possible to happen. One of the advantages of this innovative method is taking into account the conditions of the age. In many of his writings, Abduh has had a glimpse of the current of positivism and philosophical materialism. (Moradi, 1367, vol. 13, p. 5)

Abduh's point of view has also influenced other thinkers. For instant, Farid Wajdi believes that it is permissible to carry the God's word to the meaning opposite to its appearance, due to the multiplicity of metaphors and figurative words in the Arabic language. The Qur'an was revealed in Arabic, and the momentous event that befell the army of Abrahah was depicted as birds coming down from the sky and throwing stones. The multiplicity of narrations about these birds indicates that no authentic and clear text can be found from the Messenger of God (PBUH) in this regard. Some contemporary scientists believe that these birds were carriers of plague or malaria mosquitoes or smallpox. It has happened a lot that the plague has spread in the armies and has led them to defeat and destruction. There is no word in the verse that contradicts this theory and interpretation, and thus both the rational and the narrative approaches will unite and agree with each other. There is no lexical or scientific obstacle to refute the theoretical interpretation of birds into germs. (Farid Wajdi, No date, vol. 1, pp. 34-33)

Sheikh Ahmad Mustafa Maraghi, one of the students of Abduh's interpretive school, acknowledges that he has used the interpretive theories of Muhammad Abduh a lot in his commentary. Maraghi, like Abduh, explains that flies carry the germs of disease. A germ-infected fly is enough to

make a person ill and can transmit it to a large number of people. When God wills to destroy many people with a mosquito, the occurrence of this event is not unusual and it indicates the power of God and the greatness of His kingdom. (Maraghi, 1371, vol. 30, p. 243)

In critique of Abduh's view it was stated:

**I)** In the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an, Abduh has given his mind complete freedom and has immersed himself in it to the point that he has come close to extremism in thought and exaggeration in opinion. (Zahabi, No date, vol. 2, p. 417)

**II)** The Qur'an uses the word "*ram'y*" meaning throwing, in the verse "*Tarmihim bihijarat'in min sijjil*", while according to Abduh, these tiny creatures landed on the bodies of the Elephant Companions and contaminated them. However, smallpox and measles cause gradual death, about which the phrase "*ka-asf'in makoul*" is not used, while it is a sudden death that is understood from the verses of Surah Al-Fil. The words "*Tair*", "*Tarmi*", "*Hijara*", "*Sijjil*", "*Asf*" and "*Makoul*" are all clear Arabic words that the Arab understand as soon as they hear them, and the listener's mind - except by quoting the Quran and the Prophet's hadith - do not turn toward the meanings mentioned by Abduh. The Qur'an was revealed in the Arabic language by Arab vocabulary, thus it addresses the people referring to what is understandable to them. What was the plague that destroyed only a certain group? (Look. Al-Aql, 1424 AH, vol. 1, pp. 207-208)

**III)** It is unusual in Arabic to interpret winds as "*tair'an ababil*" i.e. a flock of birds, and as long as the true meaning of the word is not impossible, use of a strange expression is not permissible. Also, soil particles cannot be interpreted as "*hijarat'an min sijjil*". This event took place in the year of the Prophet's birth, and the people, among whom were also the enemies of the Prophet, witnessed the incident. If the word "*tair*" [birds] and "*hijara*" [stones] in the Qur'an were not real facts, the Arabs would have quickly denied it and they would have had an opportunity to taunt the Prophet, but the Arabs accepted this surah; because he was telling a known fact among them. In addition, poems by non-Quraysh poets also testify to the occurrence of this miracle. (Abdul Jabbar, No date, vol. 1, p. 499)

**IV)** The importance and extraordinariness of the invasion of disease-carrying insects on the Abraha's army, and destroying and throwing them to the ground like dead leaves, is no less unusual than throwing stones [by birds]. The two are the same in terms of possibility of occurrence and irregularity, and both are signs of divine power. It does not matter if the divine tradition with which God willed the destruction of a nation be known and recognized or be unfamiliar to mankind. Divine traditions are not just familiar traditions, therefore, if the texts and hadiths indicate the authenticity of the occurrence of an extraordinary event, we will not hesitate and not turn to an esoteric interpretation (*Ta'wil*). It seems that in this extraordinary incident, God sent an unknown flock of ababil birds which were carrying unusual stones. (Sayyid Qutb, 1408 AH, vol. 6, p. 3977)

**V)** It is probable that Abduh has interpreted "*tair'an ababil*" as a microbe in order to bring the Qur'an closer to the views of some Orientalists and to the new scientific comprehension that is influenced by the empirical sensory method. (See *Abd al-Qadir*, 1424 AH, p. 344; Al-Rumi, 1403 AH, p. 722) His interpretation is based on the consolidation of reason, and harmony between Islam and Western civilization. (Muhtasib, 1402 AH, p. 267)

**VI)** Abduh thinks that the occurrence of the measles in Abraha's army is based on *mutawatir* (successive) hadiths and other hadiths agree on it, referring it to the words of "Ikrimah" and "Ya'qub ibn Utbah". Whereas, due to the differences in the texts, no narration other than the one of Ikrimah indicates the occurrence of smallpox (the narration is not successive) and the reference to them is also incorrect.

The Qur'an does not mention the occurrence of this disease, but refers to sending birds to the Abraha's army and throwing stones at them. (Al-Rumi, *ibid.*, P. 725)

**VII)** According to the narration of the flocks of birds, with the fall of the burning pebbles, the army of Abraha was suddenly wiped up in one place. Some, apparently far from the center of torment, died around the desert or in the middle of the way, and their bodies showed smallpox-like wounds. That is why some historians, commentators and Orientalists have said that the Abraha's army was infected with smallpox. (Taleghani, 1362, vol. 4, pp. 264-263) Fakhr Razi has quoted from others that when God sent the stone to the Companions of the Elephant, none of the stones hit anyone except that the skin of his body was injured and Smallpox appeared on it. (Fakhr Razi, 1420, vol. 32, p. 292)

**VIII)** Contrary to his method, Abduh elaborates in detail taking "*tair*" and "*hijara*" to mean germs and microbes. While the microbes discovered by modern medicine were unknown to the Arabs at the time of the revelation. Abduh's interpretation contradicts its basis in avoiding ambiguous interpretation and referring to interpretive narrations.

## 2- *Splitting of the Moon*

In a verse, the Qur'an refers to the event of the splitting of the moon and says: "*The Hour has come near, and the moon has split. And if they see a miracle, they turn away and say: Passing magic.*" (Qamar: 1-2)

According to the commentators, the polytheists came to the Prophet (PBUH) and said: If you are a prophet, crack the moon for us. The Prophet prayed and God split the moon in two. Meanwhile, the Prophet (PBUH) said: "Be witnesses! Be witnesses!" And then the moon stuck together again. The Quraysh said it is dawn and we should wait for the travelers to come from outside Mecca and see if they had seen this incident or not; because Muhammad could not enchant all the people of the world. The travelers arrived one after the other and the Quraysh asked them about the incident. "Yes," they replied. "We also saw that the moon was split in two, and one half was close to this mountain and the other half went the back of that mountain." (See *Tabatabai*, 2011, vol. 19, pp. 59-58; Muqatil bin Suleiman, 1423, vol. 4, p. 177; Fakhr Razi, 1420, vol. 29, p. 288)

According to Abduh, the "*Inshiqaq*" of the moon, like "*Infitar*" of the sky, indicates the disruption of world system; That is, since the divine will is placed on the destruction of the world in which we live, the current formation and order of universe will be disrupted. In this way, the stars are attracted to each other and collide with each other, the solar system collapses, and as a result, the sky turns into a tattered cloud. (Amara, 1414, vol. 5, p. 351)

Rashid Rida, in the manner of his master Abduh, denies the miracle of Shaq al-Qamar (splitting of the moon). In interpretation of this verse, he does not accept the very confirming narrations (See *Suyuti*, 1404, vol. 6, p. 132), and doubts the successiveness of the hadiths narrated in Sahih Muslim and Sahih al-Bukhari, and he also intellectually and scientifically questions the issue. He explains that God Almighty used the Qur'an as an evidence for the message of the Last Prophet (PBUH). He also bestowed him with other miracles, such as the answer to a number of his prayers, but he did not use them as evidence for his message and did not order them to be challenged by.

According to him, the verses of the Qur'an and the narrations in the Sahih that confirm those verses all indicate that the miracle of the Prophet's prophecy was nothing but the Qur'an. Because if the demanding of the polytheists about the sensory miracles was supposed to be accepted, then their suggestion in the descent of eliminating torment would have supposed to be accepted as well (Rashid

Rida, *Al-Manar*, 1414, vol. 1, pp. 333-332). If this incident really happened, people from all over the world would have seen it and narrated it frequently.

Rashid Rida, who considers the narrations about Shaq al-Qamar as weak and has a defective document and text, has tried to explain the weaknesses of the narrations in terms of feeble document and source, lack of successiveness, astronomical and principal problems, while adding that there is a diversity in the text of this hadith. This incident has been narrated from Ibn Mas'ud in both Sahihis with different terms such as: "The moon was split and we were with the Prophet in Mea", "The moon was split in Mecca", "I saw the moon was split in two; one half was on Abi Qubais and the other half on al-Suwaida", and "The moon was cracked in two halves in the Prophet time, one half was on the mountain and the other in the back of it". The well-known rule among scholars about the incommensurable conflicted narrations is the rejection of all arguments. (See Rashid Rida et al., No date, vol. 30, pp. 261-267)

Following Abduh's narration about the miracle of Shaq al-Qamar, after narrating the incident during the time of the Prophet (PBUH), Maraghi mentions some reasons to prove that the narrations are anticipations about the future and not something has happened in the past. He describes that Shaq al-Qamar was mentioned after discussing the Judgment Day, and the harmonization between the two requires that both news are independent. If this incident had taken place, many people would have seen and narrated it so it could not be deniable. The successiveness of the narration about Shaq al-Qamar is one of the things that no one has claimed except for a rare group of Muslims, and if this were the case, those narrations would not be a solitary report (*Khabar āhād*). (Maraghi, 1371, vol. 27, p. 77)

In critique of Al-Manar's view it was stated:

**I)** Abduh tries to use what is familiar to people's minds in interpreting sky splitting (*inshiqaaq*) during the Judgment Day. While in order to disrupt the system of the universe in the Judgment Day, it is not necessary for what Abduh says to happen. Because God is omnipotent and can provide the ground for disruption and corruption in the world in another way. Isn't it better to believe what the Qur'an says and not go into details based on Sheikh Abduh? On the other hand, it is possible that the Sheikh has given only an example and did not mean that the incident would certainly happen. (Zahabi, No date, vol. 2, p. 568)

**II)** One of the clearest evidences of the possibility of the moon splitting is the Holy Qur'an, and it must be accepted, even if it is not a necessity of religion. The miracle of the halving of the moon by the Prophet (PBUH), which occurred in Mecca before the Migration (*Hijra*), at the suggestion of the Quraysh polytheists, is one of the things that all Muslims agree on, citing the Qur'an and the various narrations of the two sects. (Tabatabai, 2011, vol. 19, p. 60) Many thinkers consider the occurrence of Shaq al-Qamar during the time of the Messenger of God unanimous and the hadiths about it are successive chain of narrations supported by the authentic document. (See *Ibn Kathir*, 1419, vol. 7, p. 437; Fakhr Razi, 1420, vol. 29, p. 288)

**III)** The deniers of this story offer no reason other than exclusion, and according to the common sense, exclusion in such matters is a term close to insanity. (Alusi, 1415, vol. 14, p. 76) The splitting of a celestial sphere in two halves is principally possible, and there is no rational reason for its natural impossibility and no argument-based reason for refusing its occurrence. (Javadi Amoli, 2005, p. 355)

**IV)** It is obvious that if Shaq al-Qamar had not happened, the believers, infidels and hypocrites would have denied it very soon. (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1431, vol. 1, p. 251)

**V)** The difference in the hadiths' interpretations is due to the fact that their interpretations differ depending on the attitude of the observers regarding something. In other words, making balance

between two things varies depending on the position of viewers. According to the narration of Anas ibn Malik, the Prophet (PBUH) answered the request of a group of people at night to split the moon. Obviously, people sleep at night and are in their homes and indoors. Awake people are also talking in the desert regions, and it is not as if they are constantly holding their heads up and always looking at the moon. Sometimes they do not even notice the lunar eclipse. If God wanted all the people to see His prophet's sensory miracles, He would have done it. The divine tradition of the annihilation and elimination of the nations is after a time when his prophet brings a miracle and everyone witnesses it but does not believe. God has dedicated the nation of the Last Prophet (PBUH) to His mercy and has given them more wisdom and comprehension. (Abu Suleiman, 1409, vol. 3, p. 1620)

**VI)** Abduh and Rashid Rida, with their rational orientation, without relying on the rules and principles of interpretation and without paying attention to the authentic narrations, have ignored the appearance of a number of verses and turned to the esoteric interpretation. While believing in the explicit Qur'anic verses does not require a definite reason, and deviating from the appearance of the verses, i.e. preferring the esoteric interpretation, requires reasons such as: certain understanding based on custom and reason, a carrying indication (*Qarina Sarifa*) to turn the word from its real meaning to a virtual meaning, a specific indication (*Qarina Muayyana*) the one used in the common word, opposition to the principles of Sharia and the general rules of jurisprudence. (See: *Shaker*, 1376, pp. 295-293) Therefore, if the appearance of the verse can be justified without the esoteric interpretation in a way that does not contradict the Shari'a and reason, there is no place for using it.

### 3- The Miracle of the Quran

Abduh considers the occurrence of miracles to be intellectually permissible, but considers it to be specific to the earlier prophets. When, God Almighty, according to the talent of the nations, brought miracles to his messengers in order to silence the tribes who were overwhelmed by delusion and whose minds were not enlightened by the light of knowledge. (Abduh, 1988, p. 66) In his opinion, in the time of the Last Prophet (PBUH), the phase of miracles has ended and man has reached the growth age with the religion of Islam; So that extraordinary things could not encourage a person to believe. (Rashid Rida, 1414, vol. 1, pp. 315-314)

Abduh explains how the Shari'a or the divine teachings in the nations evolved with the progress of mankind (such as the progression of childhood to youth and youth to old age) and man has gained with his thought the ability to understand the teachings of the Qur'an. (Rashid Rida, No date, p. 167)

According to Abduh, the miracles by which God confirms His prophets are proofs for those who observe those divine signs or later hear and acknowledge the news of those miracles. God Almighty knew that the chain of narration would be interrupted and the confidence of some of those who'd come later would be weakened and the indication of miracles to the message would be denied; That is why, He set up a great scientific miracle to prove the message of the Prophet of Islam, and it is a book that all creatures are unable to bring the like of it, and this inability of creatures is due to the seven kinds of miracles that exist in the Qur'an. The wise believer does not think that this book has been simply produced by an illiterate and uneducated man in such a distinctive way and an excellent order, unless it was granted to him through the divine revelation. (Rashid Rida, 1414, vol. 1, p. 218)

According to Rashid Rida, the miracle of the Qur'an will remain until the Day of Resurrection; because it is independent by itself, and since it is a divine revelation one must believe in all the miracles that it has narrated about people and proved their emergence, and we must accept the authenticity of their occurrence miraculously; Whether these miracles are for the approval of the prophets and the completion of the argument against the people or for something else. (Rashid Rida, 1414 AH, vol. 11, p. 240)

Rashid Rida, based on Abduh's definition of miracles, states that God did not use extraordinary events other than the Qur'an as evidence for the prophecy and message of the Prophet and proof for the correctness of religion, so people are not obliged to accept them, but the message of the Last Prophet (PBUH) was based on reason as well as scientific rules, because mankind has reached a kind of growth and independence, and intellectuals do not accept the strange things that contradict the common traditions in the system of existence, and they stay away from it. While counting some extraordinary events by the Last Prophet (PBUH), he considers them as among the cases of God's mercy and care for him (PBUH) and his companions in hardships. (Ibid., vol. 11, p. 159)

In Rashid Rida's opinion, if the Qur'an had not narrated the miracles confirming the Prophet Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them), more Europeans would have turned to the Qur'an, and their guidance through the Qur'an would have been faster and more general; Because the Holy Qur'an is originally based on reason and knowledge, and agreement with human nature and spiritual purification of individuals and the development of social interests. The Qur'an is a miracle that is understood by the intellect, the senses and the conscience, and it is the only miracle with which the divine message of the Prophet (PBUH) is proved, but other extraordinary matters in the Prophet's era are subject to doubts (in terms of accuracy of their indications) and esoteric interpretations. Similar things can happen at any time, and what has been narrated from Hindu and Muslim Sufis is more than what has transmitted from the Testaments, and it is one of the things that makes modern scholars detest religion. (Ibid., vol. 11, p. 155)

He transmits the following hadith "*There has never been a Prophet amongst the prophets who was not bestowed with a sign amongst the signs which were granted (on the earlier prophets) that mankind believed in it and verily I have been conferred upon revelation which Allah revealed to me. I hope that the most of them be following on the Day of Resurrection.*" (Kabir Madani Shirazi, 1409 AH, vol. 1, p. 453) to support his argument by stating that the hadith notes the difference between the specific prophecies in the past and the general prophecy [of the Last Prophet]. (Rashid Rida, Bi Ta, p. 112)

Farid Wajdi, an Egyptian journalist and encyclopedia writer and a follower of the Abduh's reforming school, believes that human intellect has now grown and that miracles are useless; because with the multiplicity of scientific materials, doubts have increased and we are in a time when belief is not accepted except with a scientific and rational reason. Accordingly, Islamic law has based its call on scientific and intellectual principles as well as the avoidance of miracles and supernatural phenomena. God knows that in the future, the effect of scientific rules on intellectual power will be greater than the one of the supernatural incidents. Islam addresses the intellect and uses sensory reasons to inform it. (Farid Wajdi, 1319, pp. 91-90)

Jawish, one of the pillars of the rational method in interpretation, like Abduh, considers the Qur'an to be the only miracle of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and believes that if miracles and extraordinary deeds were evidence that the disobedient had no choice but to submit to them, then God would have confirmed His messenger with those miracles, but these miracles actually were revealed to the former nations, but they disbelieved in them. God confirms the religion of Islam only with a miracle that is compatible with the nature (*Fitrat*) and the opponents are not able to oppose it, and that is the Holy Quran. (Jawish, 2017, p. 139)

Shaltout, one of the commentators of Al-Manar School (See *Khamis Al-Gharib*, 1439, p. 92), attributes Abduh's view on miracles to Abduh's desire to get rid of the objections of some Orientalists and he believes – like Abduh – that the prophets miracles to be sensory and the miracle of the Last prophet, i.e. revelation of the Quran, to be rational. He infers from the hadith cited by Rashid Rida that the sensory miracles of the earlier prophets were sufficient only to the observers at that age to believe in and confirm the divine message, and it can be confirmed only by successive narration, i.e. the Qur'an, but the miracles of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) unlike the miracles of the previous prophets was a revelation that the

Prophet was hearing, understanding and reasoning. The intellect understands the aspects of his miracle and does not disappear by time. Shaltout believes that God did not answer the request of the sensory miracles of the Prophet's addressees in order to keep them from the torment of elimination. (Shaltout, 1417, pp. 50-48)

He considers the authentic narration of the occurrence of extraordinary sensory events (other miracles of the Prophet) as cases of affirmation of Muslims' love and belief in the Prophet (PBUH) and a sign of the high position of the Prophet before God. He also cited the first verse of Surat Al-Isra and the 12<sup>th</sup> verse of Surat Al-Najm, considering the extraordinary events in the time of the Prophet as honoring and stabilizing the heart of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the Prophet's confidence in God's that'd take care of him. (Ibid., P. 52)

Heikal denies in his book "The Life of Muhammad" the miracles of the Prophet. (Al-Rumi, op.cit., p. 745) He considers himself influenced by the book "Islam and Christianity" by Muhammad Abduh and the articles of "Al-Urwa Al-Wuthqa" (Heikal, 1951-1953, pp. 29-28) and acknowledges that the Holy Quran as the only miracle of the Last Prophet (PBUH) is for all ages and centuries which includes other miracles of the prophets. Some people believe that sensory miracles are necessary for the perfection of the message, and the more miracles there are, the more people believe in the message. While the Prophet (PBUH) was sent to all humanity and not only to his people, and his miracle is a rational miracle. Belief in the One God does not require miracles other than the Qur'an and certification of the Prophet's message. (Ibid., Pp. 71-72)

In the critique of the words of Abduh, who considers the Qur'an to be the only miracle of the Last Prophet (PBUH), it should be noted:

**I)** The Qur'an specifies other miracles of the Prophet (PBUH) such as the *Shaq al-Qamar* and *Mi'raj*, and God has confirmed His Prophet with an intellectual and eternal miracle such as the Qur'an and other sensory miracles.

**II)** Miracles have a sensual and intellectual effect. Its sensual effect is the very natural work that can be felt by the sense, like the snake turning to a piece of wood. Nevertheless, in understanding its miracle, the mind first distinguishes the difference between the unusual and extraordinary works of nature, and then recognizes the difference between miracles and other strange sciences, such as magic, sorcery and etc. The intellect, after perceiving these two things, establishes a relationship between the miracle and the correctness of the claim of whom shows the miracle. If these three matters are reasonably clarified by the intellect, then the person who has the proof will believe in prophecy by observing the snake turning to the steak, but then again, he will never apostatize by observing the story of the Samaritan [for the lack of proof]. (Javadi Amoli, 2005, p. 247)

What plays a key role in the acceptance of the prophets' call is the purely rational argument that provides the basis for this acceptance, and the role of miracles in this field is the only seal of approval on the rational argument. For this reason, whoever contemplates about the call of the Prophet using his/her intellect, and witnesses his miracle, they will have a firm faith. (Javadi Amoli, 2009, p. 167)

**III)** What distinguishes a miracle is that it indicates the correctness and honesty of the prophecy of a prophet or message of a messenger, and it is not conditioned to be fit the time of evolution or the system of creation, but the miracle is the transgression of traditions. This statement of Rashid Rida, "the citation of the Quran from the miracles of the previous prophets, causes the West to be reluctant to accept Islam" is really shocking. It is worth mentioning that the unproductivity and weakness of the Islamic Ummah simultaneously with the rise of science in the West caused a group of scholars to establish harmony and agreement between Islamic and Western thought by any means, while there is no

problem to establishing Islam on the basis of the miracle of the Qur'an and other miracles. (Khamis al-Gharib, 1439 AH, pp. 323-322)

**IV)** The authentic hadith transmitted by Rashid Rida does not confirm his statement. The hadith focuses on the fact that the nature of the Prophet's miracle is different and stronger from the ones in the past; because the miracle of the Last Prophet (PBUH) continued after his era, while the early miracles were considered as an evidence for only that time's observers. But The Qur'an is a proof for both the people of its revelation time and those who hear it, whatever is added to their knowledge until the Day of Judgment. The stronger the reason like the Qur'an and the more stable the miracle, the greater and clearer the results of believing in it. (Ibid., P. 322) From the hadith cited by Rashid Rida, can be deduced the immortality of the miracle of the Seal of the prophets (PBUH) and the time limit for other miracles of the prophets. The Last messenger of God (PBUH) does not mean that the miracles of the earlier prophets were not heard, understood and reasoned, and only the miracle of the Holy Prophet of Islam had these characteristics. (Al-Rumi, 1403, pp. 561-560) In the description of the above narration, different explanations have been quoted, including what is meant by "*and verily I have been bestowed upon revelation which Allah revealed to me*" is that the miracle of the Qur'an is lasting until the Day of Resurrection. This meaning has been pursued with the phrase "*I hope that the most of them be following on the Day of Resurrection*" in order to achieve the great benefit and public interest of this lasting miracle. (See *Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani*, 1379, vol. 9, p. 7)

**V)** The immortality of the miracle of the Seal of the Prophets (PBUH) required that it be of the word; because the "verbal miracle" is more durable and more stable in the minds. (Mir-Damad, 1997, p. 2) It is narrated that when Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) was sent from the realm of God, rhetoric and the use of eloquent speech was the common art at that time. He brought them sermons and wisdom from God that were impossible for the people of that time to deal with, and he poured all these sermons and advices in the form of rhetoric and eloquent words and finished the argument for them with superiority and the impossibility of opposition, and invalidated their promise. (Majlisi, 1403, vol. 11, p. 70; Tabarsi, 1403 AH, vol. 2, p. 432)

**VI)** Among the miracles of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), Rashid Rida was satisfied only with the miracle of the Holy Quran and described it as a rational miracle. By doing so, he seems to have wanted to exonerate the status of the Prophet from the suspicion of other miracles that are contrary to the science and traditions of the universe. In this regard, by weakening the narrations and their narrators, he refuted the authentic hadiths about miracles. (Al-Rumi, 1403 AH, p. 569) While there is no need to reject the authentic hadiths, propose false interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an and deny the miracles of the Prophet. All miracles of the last Prophet (PBUH) are in the same rank in terms of proving the miracle and its occurrence. Miracles are not beyond intellect and do not contradict reason; because miracles are unusual act and there is a general-particular relationship (*Umum-Khusus*) between the two. The subject that is beyond intellect is more general than the extraordinary subject. Every beyond-intellect state is unusual, but every unusual is not beyond-intellect. The miracles of the prophets were extraordinary and the intellect accepts it as unusual act and seeks the cause of these things, i.e. the miracle of a messenger or the magic of a magician and sorcerer. (Ibid., P. 570)

**VII)** It seems that rejecting the miracles of the Holy Messenger of God (PBUH) and limiting them only to the Qur'an, is with the intention of obtaining the approval of the Orientalists in the field of miracles, or preferring intellectual harmony with them in discussing the rationality of denying miracles. How can one expect non-Muslim Orientalists to regard the Qur'an as a miracle and consider it as the word of God and not the word of the Prophet, as long as some Muslims deny miracles because they oppose common traditions, or oppose science and reason, and not because they do not refer to the authentic hadiths? Therefore, it is necessary to cure the source of this illness and resist the attacks of the deniers. (Sabri, No date, vol. 4, p. 111)

## Results

Abduh, citing the intellectual growth of people, considers the occurrence of unusual events ineffective in convincing people to believe, and it is among the miracles of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), he only accepts the miracles of the Qur'an and, despite acknowledging the existence of extraordinary events, he interprets differently the verses concerning the miracles of the Prophet (PBUH) and tries to explain the miracle of the Elephant Companions destruction and the miracle of Splitting of the Moon of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) by rational analysis to be in accordance with the common divine traditions. Some scholars attribute these interpretations to the Abduh's extreme rationalism and the efforts of the companions of Al-Manar to defend the Qur'an against the Orientalists' claim that religion is superstitious. His interpretation as a pioneer in the field of socio-rational interpretation influenced other thinkers and they also considered the Qur'an as the only miracle of Seal of the Prophets (PBUH) and denied his other miracles.

## References

### The Holy Quran

- As'adi, Mohammad, (2016) Flowology of socio-rational interpretation, Qom: Research Institute of Hawza and University.
- Alusi, Mahmoud Ibn Abdullah, (1415) Ruh al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Quran al-Azeem wa al-Saba al-Muthani (Researcher: Ali Abd al-Bari Atiyah), 16 volumes, Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiya.
- Ibn Taymiyyah, Ahmad bin Abd al-Halim, (1431) The correct answer for those who exchanged the religion of Christ, researcher: Ali bin Hasan Alma'i, Abd al-Aziz bin Ibrahim al-Askar, Hamdan bin Muhammad al-Hamdan, 3 volumes, Riyadh: Dar al-Fadhila.
- Ibn Kathir, Ismail bin Umar, (1419) Tafsir Al-Quran Al-Azeem (Ibn Kathir), (Researcher: Muhammad Hussein Shams al-Din), 9 volumes, Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiya, Publications of Muhammad Ali Bayzun.
- Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani, (2000) Ahmad bin Ali, Fath al-Bari fi Sharh Sahih Al-Bukhari, 13 volumes, Beirut: Dar Al-Ma'rifah.
- Abu Sulayman, Hamad bin Muhammad Al-Khattabi (1409), A'lam al-Hadith fi Sharh Sahih Al-Bukhari, Research and study: Muhammad bin Saad bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud, Mecca: The Center for the Revival of Islamic Heritage, 4 volumes.
- Jawish, Abdul Aziz (2017), Islam is the religion of nature and freedom, Cairo: Dar al-Hilal.
- Javadi Amoli, Abdullah, (2005), Revelation and prophecy in the Qur'an, Qom: Esra Publications.
- Javadi Amoli, Abdullah, (2009), Divine philosophy from Imam Rida's view(AS), Qom: Esra Publications.
- Javadi Amoli, Abdullah, (2005), Epistemology in the Qur'an, Qom: Esra Publications.
- Khamis al-Gharib, Ramadan, (1439) Muwazana bayn Manhajay Madrasa al-Manar and Madrasa Al-Umanaa fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, Cairo: Dar al-Bashir for culture and sciences.
- Khoei, Abu al-Qasim, (No date) The Boundaries of Miracles, translated by Jafar Sobhani.
- Makarem Shirazi, Naser (2007), The Message of the Quran, Tehran Islamic Library.
- Taftazani, Massoud bin Umar (1409), Shar al-Maqased, Qom: Al-Sharif Al-Razi Publications.
- Zahabi, Mohammad Hussein (No date). Al-Tafsir wa'l Mufasssiroun, Beirut: Dar Ihya' Al-Turath Al-Arabi.
- Rashid Rida, Mohammad, (1414). Tafsir Al-Quran Al-Hakim Al-Shahir bi-Tafsir Al-Manar, 12 volumes, Beirut: Dar Al-Ma'rifah.
- Rashid Rida, Mohammad, and the collection of authors (No date). Al-Manar Magazine, 35 volumes, No name.
- Rashid Rida, Mohammad (No date), Al-Wah'i Al-Muhammadi, Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub al-Ilmiya, Mohammad Ali Beizoun Publications.
- Al-Rumi Fahd bin Abd al-Rahman bin Sulayman (1403), Manhaj al-Madrasa al-Aqliyya al-Haditha fi al-Tafsir, Saudi Arabic: Al-Risalah Foundation.

- Suyuti, Abdul Rahman bin Abi Bakr (1404), *Al-Durr al-Manthur fi Tafsir bi'l-Ma'thur*, Qom: Public Library of Grand Ayatollah Marashi Najafi.
- Muqatil bin Sulayman, *Tafsir Muqatil bin Sulayman* (1423), (Researcher: Abdullah Mahmoud Shahata), Beirut: Dar al-Ihya' al-Turath Al-Arabi.
- Shakir, Mohammad Kazem (1997), *Methods of Quran Interpretation*, Qom: Islamic Propaganda Office.
- Shaltout, Mahmud (1417), *Al-Fatawa*, Cairo: Dar al-Shorouk.
- Sabri, Mustafa, No date, *Mawqif alAql wa'l Ilm wa'l Alim min Rabbi'l Alamin wa Ibadihi al-Mursalin*, Beirut: Dar al-Ihya' al-Turath Al-Arabi.
- Taleghani, Mahmoud (1983), *A glimpse of the Quran*, Tehran: Enteshar Co.
- Tabatabai, Mohammad Hussein (2011), *Al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*, Beirut: Al-A'lami Foundation for Publications.
- Tabarsi, Ahmad Ibn Ali (1403), *Al-Ihtijaj ala Ahl al-Lijaj*, Mashhad: Murtaza Publications.
- Abdul Qadir, Muhammad Saleh (1424), *Al-Tafsir wa'l Mufasssirun fi'l Asr al-Hadith*, Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah.
- Abduh, Mohammad (1988). *Islam and Christianity with science and civilization*, Beirut: Dar al-Hadatha.
- Al-Aql, Naser Ibn Abd al-Karim (1422), *Al-Ijtihat Al-Aqlaniyah Al-Haditha, Silsilah al-Rasail al-Jamiiya* (13) Riyadh: Dar Al-Fadhilah.
- Abdul Jabbar, Abdullah (No date), *Qissatu'l Adab fi al-Hijaz*, No date.
- Amara, Muhammad (1414), *Al-A'mal al-Kamila li Sheikh Muhammad Abduh*, Cairo and Beirut: Dar Al-Shorouk.
- Amara, Muhammad (1408), *Imam Muhammad Abduh Mujaddid al-Dunya bi Tajdidal-Din*: Dar al-Shorouk.
- Fakhr Razi, Muhammad ibn Umar (1420), *Al-Tafsir Al-Kabir (Mafatih Al-Ghayb)*, Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath Al-Arabi.
- Farid Wajdi, Mohammad (1319), *Civilization and Islam*, Egypt: Dar al-Taraqqi.
- Farid Wajdi, Mohammad (No date), *Encyclopedia of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, the Twentieth*, Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah.
- Qutb, Sayyid (1408), *Fi Zilal al-Qur'an*, Beirut: Dar Al-Shorouk.
- Kabir Madani Shirazi, Sayyid Ali Khan bin Ahmad (1409), *Riyadh al-Salikin Sharh Sahifat Sayyid Al-Sajidin*, Qom: Islamic Publications Office.
- Muhtasib, Abd al-Majid Abd al-Salam (1402), *Ittijahat al-Tafsir fil Asr al-Rahin*, Oman: Library of Al-Nahdha al-Islamiya.
- Majlisi, Mohammad Baqir bin Mohammad Taqi (1403), *Bihar al-Anwar*, Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath Al-Arabi.
- Moradi, Majid (1997), *Egyptian Islamic Movements, Interview with Muhammad Amara, "Pegah Hozeh"*, Qom: Qom Seminary Islamic Propaganda Office.
- Al-Maraghi, Ahmad Mustafa (1371), *Tafsir al-Maraghi*, Beirut: Dar al-Fikr.
- Mir Damad, Mohammad Baqer (1997), *Al-Qabasat*, Tehran: University of Tehran Press.
- Heikal, Muhammad Hussein (1951-1953) *Muzakkerat fi al-Siyasa al-Misriyyah*, Cairo: Egyptian Ennahda School.
- Heikal, Muhammad Hussein (No date), *Muhammad's Life*, Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif.

## Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).