

عجاز القرآن: دراسة وبيان رشيد المغربي

MIRACLES OF THE QUR'AN: A STUDY & ANALYSIS

by Rachid the Moroccan

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Reviewed by Nadia Bichara. (Translated from French by Don Little)

Nadia is Algerian, and has produced various programs in various media to broadcast in colloquial Arabic to Algeria for many years, which God has used to bring many Algerians to faith in Christ. She and her husband are among the founding elders of one of the longest standing and most influential churches in Algeria, and though now living in France, their ministry is entirely focused on helping believers in Algeria and proclaiming Christ to their people.

True to form, as in his television broadcasts, Rachid has been extraordinarily clear and concise in this book. Rachid is a believer from Muslim background who thoroughly studied Islam in his youth and who continues to do theological and scholarly research today on many thorny subjects that have been raised about the Qur'an by both well-informed Muslims and involved, knowledgeable Christians. In effect, all who carefully examine the historical, geographic and scientific validity of the Qur'an should consider Rachid's analysis.

In one section in which Rachid discusses comparative religions, he puts the spotlight on certain truths that no one has previously raised. His true motivation was that he wanted to be honest with himself and then honest with everyone else about what he has seen and understood. He is particularly concerned to be honest with Muslims whom he loves and for whom he wants to ensure fuller clarity on the essential truths. This is why he has undertaken to write this book in a scientific way in order to raise a number of significant and specific questions.

To this end, Rachid has tackled a topics that no one has dared raise in a book until now, which Muslims in the past and present have taken pride in: the miracle of the Qur'an. According to them, the appearance of the Qur'an is a miracle both linguistically and scientifically, and also in terms of its influence on the world and the fact that it has been so well preserved through the centuries.

Here I will present just a few of Rachid's comments on these important topics.

On the Linguistic aspect of the 'miracle':

Muslims claim that the fact that the Qur'an is neither a poem, nor a sermon, nor a letter shows that it is thereby unique! Rachid responds by citing eminent Muslim specialists who say that any one of a number of people could have written

in this way. Rachid continues: 'Furthermore, if the Qur'an is reputed to be known as the word of God because it is clear and concise, then why did there have to be two witnesses when the verses of the Surahs were originally collected together in order to be written down?' Rachid also points out a number of shortcomings in Qur'anic style and language: words that sound as if they have a foreign origin, and repetitions that should not be present in well-crafted writing.

On the things that Mohammed claimed to be 'revealed':

Claiming that Mohammed was *illiterate*, some Muslims then go on to suggest that another indication of the miraculous nature of the Qur'an is that Mohammed

spoke about certain historic nations that he could have known nothing about humanly speaking, and that he was, therefore inspired. Rachid challenges such thinking and asks: Does the state of being *illiterate* mean that one is completely cut off from the world and that Mohammed could not have heard and listened to people telling of historical events and peoples? After all, we know in any case, that Arab culture is an oral culture. So where is the 'miracle' in Mohammed having knowledge of historical nations outside the Arab world of his time? Who among his contemporaries alive at the time wouldn't have had such knowledge?

Furthermore, Rachid totally undermines the case for his being illiterate by quoting sayings of Mohammed himself, as well as the writings of a number of Muslim scholars. Rachid also shows that a number of the stories in the Qur'an certainly came from the Bible (somewhat distorted, naturally), and other stories in the Qur'an are shown to be simple anecdotes well known by people of his era. Thus all of the claimed 'revelations' that Mohammed had of 'secret knowledge' can be explained easily by other natural means – there was no miracle here!

On the 'miraculous' preservation of the Qur'an:

Rachid dismisses this so called 'miracle' by simply quoting from some poems and other ancient books that we have today that were written even before the advent of Christianity, six centuries before Mohammed. Preserving the text of the Qur'an uncorrupted for fourteen centuries is nothing unusual and certainly ought not to be considered a miracle!

Conclusion:

I very much appreciated that Rachid quoted the writings of Muslim scholars and demonstrated their lack of coherence. What is more, he speaks with disarming logic and asks pertinent questions of the readers in order to make them truly think.

This book is written especially to educated Muslims who are quite knowledgeable about Islam. It is equally helpful for Christians who work among this type of informed Muslim, enabling them to be able to respond to their questions on such matters.

Excellent work, brother Rachid. Bravo!

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