

THIRD INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON BEDIUZZAMAN SAID NURSI

**THE RECONSTRUCTION OF ISLAMIC
THOUGHT IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
AND BEDIUZZAMAN SAID NURSI**

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by Şükran Vahide

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Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Method of Expounding the Qur'an's Miraculousness

Ziyad Khalil Muhammad al-Daghamin

"Know that the Shari'a of Islam is founded upon rational proofs. It is the summary of the branches of knowledge which comprise in their entirety the vital points of the fundamental sciences. Yes, the Shari'a of Islam is the index of the principles which comprise sciences and branches of knowledge like the refinement of the spirit, the discipline of the heart, the training of the conscience, the nurturing of the body, the economy of the house, the administration of civilized life, the ordering of the world, law, and the conduct and relations of society. (...) Therefore, anyone who is fair-minded will confirm that at all times, and especially in former times, it would have been beyond the power of man [to create] the Shari'a."

"As time grows older, the Qur'an grows younger; its signs become apparent."

"While there is a perpetual miracle like the Qur'an, searching for further proof appears to my mind as superfluous;

"While there is a proof of reality like the Qur'an, would silencing those who deny it weigh heavily on my heart?"

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Introduction

All praise be to God, the Sustainer of the Worlds, and peace and blessings be upon Muhammad, the foremost of the messengers and seal of the prophets, and on all His Family and Companions and those who follow him, till the end of time.

Prof. Dr. ZIYĀD KHALĪL MUḤAMMAD AL-DAGHĀMĪN,

Prof. al-Daghamin was born in Amman in 1962. He received his Master's degree in 1987, and his Doctorate in 1991. He at present teaches in the International Islamic University of Malaysia. His published works include: (in Arabic) *Methodology of Qur'anic Commentaries In Respect of Subject Matter*; *Methodology of Qur'anic Commentaries In Respect of Disciplines*.

As in former times, scholars today study the Qur'an, and they see that throughout the ages it has contained all the positive innovations in human life; that it is capable of holding its own in the face of all human systems, and is a treasury of messages beneficial for man. Today too the Qur'an continues to issue the same challenge; it continues to challenge men and jinn in the questions of depicting the way of true knowledge, setting forth the method of true thought, establishing the bases of beneficial civilization, in setting out the principles of ideal life. Not a day passes but scholars discover another aspect of its miraculousness. They used to say: "It is the beauty of its manner of expression that leaves the eloquent in astonishment, dazzling their minds." "Its giving news of the Unseen and predictions of the future are a miracle." "One of the aspects of its miraculousness is the effect it has on people's hearts and the way it attracts their spirits." "You will see neither prose nor poetry that penetrates to the heart as soon as it is heard in the way that the Qur'an does." "Another aspect of its miraculousness are the scientific facts it contains connected with the universe and its laws." Modern scholars say that the principles it contains in the field of law-making and education are a miracle. And finally, at the present time a new aspect of its miraculousness is under discussion, and that is its incomparableness in respect of method and education. Bediuzzaman speaks of all these aspects of miraculousness in the following concise way: "The Qur'an is the source of miracles, it a great ocean of miracles."

I want to express my sorrow, because even if not all of them, the great majority of those who write on the subject of the Qur'an's miraculousness at the present time are not aware of what Bediuzzaman Said Nursi wrote on the subject. Whereas Bediuzzaman followed a method unique in the field of expounding the Qur'an's miraculousness, seriously worth study and research. There is in fact nothing to compare with what he wrote on the subject. His life coincided with a period of darkness for the Islamic Umma. He saw the collapse of the Caliphate, and witnessed the activities of a group which was determined to destroy the beliefs and morality of Islam, to break off Muslims from their religion and culture, and make Islam a satellite of contemporary Western civilization. But he was not idle, he challenged them with the Qur'an. According to Bediuzzaman, the struggle is one of ideas, knowledge, belief, and civilization.

Like other scholars and saints have done so with their knowledge, Bediuzzaman lived with the Qur'an, never abandoning it, even for a second. If, on the battlefields of the First World War, he fought the enemy with the sword once, he did battle with them with the sword of the Qur'an many times. In fact he wrote his celebrated work *Ishārāt al-I'jāz* on the front. Although many important events occurred during his life, I want here to draw attention to a number of points which demonstrate clearly the breadth of his vision, the maturity of his thought, the profundity of his view, and his far-sightedness.

He invited the authorities to found an Islamic university, called the *Medresetü'z-Zehra*, and himself attempted to do this. Basic to this university was his goal of not separating the sciences; the modern sciences would be taught together with the sciences of the Qur'an and *Sunna*. He said the following to the

deputies in the National Assembly, when explaining to them the importance of this university: "The Eastern Provinces are the centre of the Islamic World. The religious sciences must be taught together with the empirical sciences."¹ It was his aim that it should be the pulpit of the intellectual struggle against the West and materialist philosophy. On learning of the statement of the British Colonial Secretary that they had to eliminate the Qur'an, Bediuzzaman declared: "I shall demonstrate and prove to the world that the Qur'an is an undying, inextinguishable Sun!"² There is a strong possibility that when advertising his idea of founding such a university, he was aware of the "Islamization of knowledge" propounded by *al-Ma'had al-'Ālamī li'l-Fikr al-Islāmī*. The evidence for this is his realizing the importance of sciences such as mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, philosophy, geology, and geography, and that they should be taught and based on Qur'anic principles. The verses he expounded when writing the *Risale-i Nur* corroborate this. Even, Bediuzzaman is among the foremost propounders of this idea.

Bediuzzaman thought it better that Turkey should not enter the First World War. But when she did enter it, he formed a militia regiment and fought against the Russians. He also called on the Islamic world to enter this jihad. He defended the religion of Islam and the Muslims in the best manner. He could not have done anything else, for he was someone who had taken on himself the troubles of the Islamic community, and who suffered with their pains.³

Bediuzzaman had profound knowledge of the age in which he lived and its conditions. He was aware of the war the cunning enemy had declared on the religion of Islam and its followers. He perceived all the dangers before they occurred. He therefore dedicated his life and pen to defending Islam and wrote the *Risale-i Nur*, the product of this struggle. It is because of this that his works are in the form of an utterly convincing answer to Western materialist philosophy and its harmful civilization. His efforts to understand the Qur'an and expound it as it is, afforded him the possibility of gaining knowledge of its mysteries and truths.

According to Bediuzzaman, the Qur'an is "*the pre-eternal translator of the mighty Book of the Universe; the post-eternal interpreter of the various tongues reciting the verses of creation; the commentator on the book of the Worlds of the Seen and the Unseen; the revealer of the treasures of the Divine Names hidden in the heavens and on the earth; the key to the truths concealed beneath the lines of events; the tongue of the Unseen World in the Manifest World; the treasury of the post-eternal favour of Divine Mercy and of the pre-eternal addresses of Divine Glory, which come from the World of the Unseen beyond the veil of this Manifest World; it is the sun, foundation, and plan of the immaterial world of Islam; the sacred map of the worlds of the hereafter; the expounding word,*

1. 'Alī Muhyiddīn 'Alī, *Tarjama Badī'uz-Zamān al-Nūrī* (Muqaddima *Kitāb al-Insān wa'l-Īmān*), Cairo, Dār al-Itisām, 27.

2. Ibid., 28; 52.

3. Ibid., 39.

lucid exposition, decisive proof, and clear interpreter of the Divine Essence, Attributes, Names, and functions; it is the instructor of the world of humanity; the light and water of Islam—the macroanthropos; the true wisdom of mankind; and the true guide and leader urging humanity to prosperity and happiness; it is both a book of law, and a book of prayer, and a book of wisdom, and a book of worship, and a book of command and summons, and a book of invocation, and a book of thought, and a unique, comprehensive Sacred Book, comprising many books, to which recourse may be had for all the needs of all mankind.”⁴

Undoubtedly, Bediuzzaman’s is an understanding which is profound and comprehensive and encompasses the aims and purposes of the Qur’an. Such an understanding was clearly an important factor in his expounding the Qur’an’s miraculousness.

Bediuzzaman states that the Qur’an possesses six aspects, which lead to a complete knowledge of God. The first is the Qur’an’s basis, which is Revelation. The second is its goal, man’s happiness in this world and the next. The third is its being a clear miracle. The fourth is its being based on the pillars of evidence and certain proof. The fifth is its holding the conscience as witness. That is, the conscience cannot conceal the wonder it feels in the face of the breaths of spirit it emits on the heart, and cannot prevent itself from exclaiming: “Ma’shallah!” The sixth is its summoning the reason to corroborate it with its many phrases like “Will they not think?” “Moreover, the fruits the Qur’an produces are both perfect and living. In which case, the roots of the tree of the Qur’an are founded in reality and are living. For the life of the fruit points to the life of the tree. See, how many perfect, living, luminous fruits it has produced each century, like the saints and purified scholars!”⁵

Bediuzzaman was able to gain this comprehensive knowledge of the Qur’an through detailed reflection on its verses, and by living in its atmosphere. His discovering its aspects of miraculousness was also the product of close thought. This demonstrates that Bediuzzaman’s method is based on reasoning and reflective thought, and that this gained for him originality and self-sufficiency.

Undoubtedly, the extensive culture which Bediuzzaman possessed and the many modern sciences which he had studied played a large role in his understanding the Qur’an and setting forth its miraculousness.

In connection with the subject of miraculousness, I have studied the lengthy expositions, first in the treatises published individually, then as part of the collections of *Sözler*, *Mektûbat*, *Lem’alar*, and *Ishârât al-l’jâz*. I collected together

4. al-Nürsî, Badî’ü’z-Zamân Sa’id, *Ishârât al-l’jâz fî Muẓâmm al-Îjâz [tahqîq: İhsan Qasim al-Salihî]*, İstanbul, Sözler Yayınevi 1994, 23. See also, al-Nürsî, Badî’ü’z-Zamân Sa’id, *al-Kalimât* [trans: İhsan Qasim al-Salihî], İstanbul 1992, 264 / *The Words* [Eng. trans: Şükran Vahide], Sözler Publications 1992, 376-7.

5. al-Nürsî, Badî’ü’z-Zamân Sa’id, *al-Mektûbat* [trans: İhsan Qasim al-Salihî], İstanbul, Sözler Yayınevi 1992, 248-9 / *Bediuzzaman Said Nursi—Letters 1928-1932* [Eng. trans: Şükran Vahide], Sözler Publications 1994, 229. See also, *al-Kalimât*, 345; B. S. al-Nürsî, *Haqîqat al-Tawhîd* [trans: İhsan Qasim al-Salihî], Bağdad 1985, 66-7; B. S. Nursî, *al-Âyat al-Kubrâ* [trans: İhsan Qasim al-Salihî], Bağdad 1983, 87.

these parts and set them in order. Bediuzzaman was influenced by 'Abd al-Qahir Jurjani, Zamakhshari, and Sakkaki, so I have found it appropriate to expound what they wrote and then compare it with Bediuzzaman's works. With this aim, under a separate heading, I compared Bediuzzaman's expositions of a number of verses and Zamakhshari's. In this way I have tried to pin-point Bediuzzaman's understanding of the miraculousness. Not limiting myself to the explanations of the earlier scholars on the subject, I have attempted to put forward new and original points on the subject. First of all I have defined "miracle" and "miraculousness." I have written detailed descriptions of the miraculousness of the word-order. Then, not limiting myself to the aspects of miraculousness they pointed out in their writings, I have discussed the aspects expounded by Bediuzzaman. I have added new headings in accordance with the aspects of miraculousness I have discussed. I have quoted what they wrote in summary form, or expressed their ideas in my own words. I have argued some of the points, stating my own views. In the Conclusion, I have offered a summary of the many conclusions I have drawn.

May God be pleased with Ihsan Qasim al-Salihi, the translator into Arabic of Bediuzzaman's works, and with all our brothers who have organized this Symposium. Success is from God alone. *"For us God suffices, and He is the Best Disposer of Affairs."*

The meaning of the terms 'miracle' and 'miraculousness'

In his work *al-Mufradāt*, Raghib al-Isfahani states that the word "'Ajz" is taken from the term "'Ajz al-insān" meaning "the back or hindpart of man." When the word 'ajz is used for beings other than man, it is used as a simile for this part of man. In the Qur'an, God uses the plural form of the word, "a'jāz." "Plucking out men as if they were roots of palm-trees torn up [from the ground]." (54:20) Basically the word means to remain behind from a thing, or not to reach something. al-Isfahānī touches on this point while explaining the word "*Dubur*." It has popularly come to mean having insufficient power to do something. 'Acz (impotence) is the opposite of power. In the Qur'an, it is used in the verse "*Was I not even able to be as this raven...*" (5:34) It is also used in Arabic in such phrases as "*A'jaztu fulānan*," "*A'jaztuhu*," "*Ja'altuhu 'ajīzan*." While the expression "*A'jūz*" being used for old women is in on account of their incapability.⁶

As for the word "*mu'jiza*", it means the extra-ordinary phenomena which accompany claims to prophethood, and which it is not otherwise possible to bring about.⁷ Miracles are evidences which God causes to happen by means of prophets in order to confirm their claims to prophethood.

Bediuzzaman's definition of miracles is similar to this. He says: "The miracle

6. Abu'l-Qāsim al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Ma'rūf bi'l-Rāghib Isfahānī, *al-Mufradāt*, Beirut, 322-3.

7. al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abi Bakr, *al-Itqān 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Beirut 1973, ii, 116.

is the confirmation by the Creator of the universe of his claim to prophethood; it has the effect of the words, 'You have spoken truly!'"⁸ He states that the purpose of miracles is to persuade those who deny the claims to prophethood, not to compel them.⁹ This is a very subtle allusion; generally speaking he reflects the Islamic approach to miracles as something extraordinary. Bediuzzaman took this measure from the Qur'an and applied it exactly in all his treatises.

Bediuzzaman's method of proving the Qur'an's miraculousness

Similarly to al-Jurjani, Zamakhshari, and Sakkaki, Bediuzzaman points out that the Qur'an's miraculousness may be known in three ways. The first was its appearing like the rising sun above the Arabs with its astonishing eloquence, and their not being able to contest it. The second is the testimony of thousands of exacting scholars, stating that it was not possible for the qualities, beauty, and truths it comprises to be found together in anything composed by man. The third, as stated, the Arab orators and experts in rhetoric not attempting to contest it, despite their intense need to do so.¹⁰

Bediuzzaman discussed the question of proving the Qur'an's miraculousness in many places in his writings,¹¹ and said in addition that thousands of scholars studying every aspect of it with minute attention was certain proof that it was a Divine miracle.¹² His statement that the Qur'an is a miracle has been expressed in the following way: "Know that the Qur'an's miraculousness has preserved it from being corrupted. No commentator, no author, no translator or corrupter of texts, has been able to corrupt its verses as they have the other revealed scriptures; it cannot be contained in their garb."¹³

Bediuzzaman's views on its miraculousness in comparison with the Sarfa School's Interpretation

Unlike certain Mu'tazilite and Shi'i scholars, Bediuzzaman did not accept the Sarfa School's interpretation of the Qur'an's miraculousness. He states that the most correct approach in this matter is that of Jurjani, Zamakhshari, and Sakkaki, that "It is beyond human power to attain to the Qur'an's elevated word-order."¹⁴ He stated about the view of some scholars, that the reason not even one word of the Qur'an has been successfully challenged is that God has not permitted this and not allowed the opportunity, that it was not the preferred view. Bediuzzaman prefers the view of the great majority of scholars, which is that the Qur'an's subtleties of eloquence and meaning are beyond human power. For its

8. *al-Maktūbāt*, 117 / *Letters*, 119.

9. *al-Maktūbāt*, 272 / *Letters*, 249; *al-Kalimāt*, 703.

10. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 179-181.

11. See, *al-Kalimāt*, 424-6 / *The Words*, 378-80; *al-Āyat al-Kubrā*, 88 / *The Supreme Sign* [Eng. trans: Hamid Algar], Sözlük Publications 1993, 80.

12. *al-Āyat al-Kubrā*, 89.

13. Adīb Ibrāhīm al-Dabbāgh, *Mukhtārāt min al-Mathnawī al-'Arabī al-Nūrī*, li Badi' u'z-Zamān al-Nūrsī, Musul 1983, 39.

14. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 188.

sentences and words look to one another. Some of its words, even, look to ten places; in such words are ten points of eloquence and ten relationships.¹⁵

The stages in the Qur'an's challenge

Bediuzzaman describes the stages in the Qur'an's challenging men to produce the like of it. In one of his works these stages number nine, while in another they are eight. They are as follows:

1. An unlettered person like Muhammad al-Amīn producing the like of it.
2. He should not then be unlettered, but a great and eloquent scholar.
3. If a single person cannot do this, then all of you should unite and pool your efforts.
4. If you cannot do that, make use of earlier works of eloquence, and even call on those of the future to help you to produce the like of it.
5. And if you cannot do that, produce the like of only ten suras.
6. And if you cannot do that either, put it together out of tales and fictitious stories.
7. And if you cannot do that either, just produce the like of a single sura.
8. And if you cannot do that either, your religion, lives, property, and families will all be in peril, both in this world and in the hereafter.¹⁶

As we said before, in another work Bediuzzaman adds another stage to these eight. The seventh above is divided into two; first challenging them to bring a long Sura, and then a short one.¹⁷

In *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, these stages number nine, but they are divided up slightly differently to the above. It is as follows: in the first stage he states that they are challenged to get an illiterate to produce an entire Qur'an together with all the truths, sciences and predictions concerning the Unseen it comprises, in addition to the elevated word-order. Secondly, a book like the Qur'an is required, even if its contents are made up. If before, ten suras were required, now the truths are requested. Then if they cannot get an illiterate to produce any sura, they should get a gifted scholar to do so. He makes their seeking help from all jinn and mankind a further stage. And at the ninth stage says that in order to refute their pretext that no one would support them if they were to attempt to contest the Qur'an, tells them that they can summon witnesses to help, if they can.¹⁸

The fact these stages are one within the other is striking. What prompts Bediuzzaman to describe these stages in such detail is to impress on his contemporaries in particular the idea that the Qur'an is a miracle and to show the total impotence of those who, being unable to contest it, are driven to oppose it by force. Other scholars have sufficed with mentioning only the four or five stages that the Qur'an states explicitly.¹⁹

15. *al-Maktūbāt*, 245-6 / *Letters*, 227.

16. *al-Maktūbāt*, 245-6 / *Letters*, 226.

17. *al-Kalīmāt*, 444 / *The Words*, 395; *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 187.

18. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 187.

19. Muṣṭafā Ṣadiq al-Rāfi'i, *I'jāz al-Qur'ān wa'l-Balāgha al-Nabawī*, Egypt, al-Maktaba al-Tijāriyya 1961, 191.

The aspects of the Qur'an's miraculousness according to Bediuzzaman

When discussing the aspects of the Qur'an's miraculousness, Bediuzzaman pointed out not one, but innumerable aspects. He stated that it is a miracle for all the classes of mankind in all ages. In some of his works, he concentrates on a single aspect, the word-order. In others, he states that it has seven universal aspects. While in others he speaks of ten universal aspects. Again, he frequently says that it has forty aspects of miraculousness, corresponding to the various classes of mankind. He says that the Qur'an displays an aspect of its miraculousness to the followers of different ways, and that each sees in it an aspect of which the others are unaware.²⁰ This is in no way strange according to Bediuzzaman, for the Qur'an is a source of miracles, and a supreme miracle proving completely the prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) and the Divine unity.²¹

Proving the Qur'an's miraculousness in respect of the relation between it and the Prophet (PBUH), he says: "Just as together with all its miracles and truths the Qur'an is a miracle of Muhammad (PBUH), so together with all his miracles, his accomplishments and knowledge, and the evidences of his prophethood, is Muhammad (PBUH) a miracle of the Qur'an, and a decisive proof that it is the speech of the Sustainer of All the Worlds."²² "The Qur'an proved his prophethood through its miraculousness, and it proved its miraculousness through their attempting to surpass it, and this it proved through their silence..."²³

Without giving the numbers, I shall now set forth the aspects of miraculousness which Bediuzzaman mentions in many of his works:

FIRST ASPECT: The miraculousness of the Qur'an's word-order

Before expounding the miraculous nature of the Qur'an's word-order, Bediuzzaman offers an Introduction consisting of twelve of the chief characteristics of rhetoric (eloquence). For he was of the opinion that these matters formed the main aspect of the Qur'an's miraculousness. I shall offer a summary of this Introduction. The source may be referred to for more detailed information.²⁴

The First: Word-order is the natural channel of thoughts and feelings, and the source of eloquence. The universe was created as eloquent, and each of its beings is a miracle of power. When speech is in complete conformity with this arrangement, and the order of the words conforms with the order of the world, it becomes eloquent in every respect.

The Second: Enrapturing eloquence, together with apt metaphors and figures of speech, is based on reality.

20. *al-Maktûbât*, 253 / *Letters*, 232.

21. *al-Nûrsî*, Badi'ü'z-Zamân Sa'id, *al-Lama'ât* [trans: Ihsan Qasim al-Salihî], Istanbul, Sözleryayinevi 1993, 40. See also, B. S. al-Nûrsî, *Risâlat al-Shuyûkh li-Bedî'üzzamân* [trans: Ihsan Qasim al-Salihî], Musul 1984, 12; *al-Kalimât*, 264, 881 / *The Words*, 250; *al-Ayat al-Kubrâ*, 82 / *Supreme Sign*, 72; *al-Maktûbât*, 118, 143 / *Letters*, 122, 144.

22. *al-Ayat al-Kubrâ*, 83 / *Supreme Sign*, 72.

23. *Ishârât al-I'jâz*, 202.

24. *Ishârât al-I'jâz*, 118-125.

The Third: Speech acquires beauty and perfection through its styles. Style is a mould from metaphors and allegories. These are derived from the form of reality and the relations between things. The style of comparison and allegory are useful in that they convey fine meanings to the listener. The purpose of variety of style is to awaken meanings slumbering in the corners of the heart.

The Fourth: The parts of eloquent speech and word-order are in harmony with each other, each taking the hand of the others and supporting them.

The Fifth: The modes, parts, and allusions of the word-order point to the necessities and subsidiaries of the aim. Just as the original speech alluded to these. And this is evidence for the richness and breadth of the speech.

The Sixth: The mark of eloquence is to express clearly what is required by the situation and what the person addressed wants, then, to include within the meaning which it has poured into the above mould, pointers to the other levels of meaning. For there are meanings like yearning, regret, longing, boasting, address, signs, sorrow, astonishment, amazement, and pride which are so subtle that there are no particular words to express them.

The Seventh: When the style is based on imagination —metaphor and description— reality has to be taken as the axis. Because the philosophy of grammar is of this sort.

The Eighth: While increasing meanings, prepositions like “with,” “from,” and “to” have only one essential meaning; this essential meaning cannot be separated from them. But sometimes in accordance with the aim of the sentence a secondary meaning emerges, and it draws that meaning to itself.

The Ninth: The highest degree of eloquence is for the speaker to preserve the balance and relationships of the sentences and words, making each support the other, so that they resemble an embroidery stretching in sequence towards a supreme tapestry. In this way, it is as though the speaker has added many minds to his mind, employing them. Another reason for excellence in speech is the aims proceeding in sequence, and, like in the story of Moses, for many aspects and subsidiaries to assist in design.

The Tenth: For speech to be fluent, the meanings and feelings have either to blend and unite with each other, or together with differing to be harmonious. Thus, the centre is strengthened from the outside. Fluency also demands that the aim is stated and that the elements support one another.

The Eleventh: The soundness of speech necessitates its being ordered, then it can repulse doubts and scepticism.

The Twelfth: Style is of three sorts: Simple style, like the works of Sayyid Jurjani. Embellished style, like *Dalā'il al-I'jāz* and *Asrār al-Balāgha*. And high style, the characteristics of which are intensity, power, grandeur, and loftiness. Suitable subjects for this style are theology, the principles of religion, and philosophy. Like the Qur'an.

Bediuzzaman devoted his work *Ishārāt al-I'jāz* to investigating the miraculousness of the Qur'an's word-order. He states his aim as follows: “Our purpose

in writing this work, called *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, is to explain the signs and allusions to miraculousness in the word-order and phraseology of the Qur'an. For an important aspect of its miraculousness is manifested in its word-order. Its most brilliant miraculousness consists of the embroideries of the word-order."²⁵

I consider it necessary before discussing Bediuzzaman's views on the word-order, to present 'Abd al-Qāhir Jurjānī's views on the matter, for the most important aspect of the Qur'an's miraculousness is its word-order. Bediuzzaman is in agreement with Jurjānī on this point and highly commends his theories. We shall also touch on Zamakhsharī's endeavour in this field.

Jurjānī's theory of the Qur'an's word-order

Jurjānī said: "Word-order consists only of speech being composed in accordance with the rules of grammar, suitably to its rules and principles, knowing its specific methods and not deviating from them, and observing the principles it lays down and neglecting none of them." He continues, "The way is this. Be it right or wrong, whatever is connected with word-order, is connected with grammar, and it is assumed under that name. A word is placed completely correctly and it is given its due, or the opposite is done and it is misplaced, not being situated where it should have been. There is no word-order characterized by its soundness or corruption, or speech qualified by some virtue or superiority, the source of whose soundness or corruption, virtue or superiority is not the meanings and rules of grammar; which may not be included under one of the principles of that science, or in one of its branches..."²⁶

According to Jurjānī, metaphor, allusion, comparison and allegory in all their forms are the requisites of word-order. The word-order arises from these, and subsists through them. It is unheard of that when one of these is defective, it does not concern only that element itself, but concerns the rules of grammar connected with it.²⁷ It is only because of its word-order and harmony that the Qur'an is a miracle.²⁸

According to Jurjānī, there are three elements of speech: word, meaning, and order. There are two processes necessary for word-order. The first is the meanings being set in due order in the mind. The second is the words being set in due order in the speech.²⁹ There are two striking aspects of this theory: that pertaining to the mind, and that pertaining to thought. The former becomes apparent in the effect the reader feels on studying and pondering over the eloquent words. While the latter becomes apparent in one respect from the relations between the meanings, and in the other respect, in the relations between the meanings and the

25. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 23.

26. 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī, *Dalā'il al-I'jāz* [*Taṣḥīḥ*: Aḥmad al-Marāghī], Cairo, Dār al-Maktab al-'Arabīyya 1950, 55-6.

27. al-Jurjānī, *Dalā'il*, 281-290. See also, Dr. Faṭḥī 'Āmir, *Fikra al-Nazm Bayna Vujūh al-I'jāz fi'l-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, Cairo, al-Majlis al-'A'lā li'l-Shu'ūn Islāmiyya 1975, 115.

28. al-Jurjānī, *Dalā'il*, 250.

29. Faḍl Ḥasan 'Abbās, *I'jāz al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, 'Amman 1991, 71; also see, al-Rāfi'i, 166-167.

words. These relations are not only in regard to how they are placed, but both in their being placed correctly and in following the natural sequence of the sentences.³⁰

Zamakhshari applied this theory in practical and detailed manner in his commentary, and the distinction of clarifying it is his.³¹

Bediuzzaman, too, frequently dwells on the role of word-order in the question of miraculousness, and says: "The source of the embroideries of eloquence are the word-order of the meaning, not the order of the words in the manner of superficial worshippers of words. In such people love of words is a sickness so chronic that 'Abd al-Qahir Jurjani was compelled to answer them in *Dalā'il al-I'jāz* and *Asrār al-Balāgha*, assigning more than a hundred pages to disputing with them."³²

Bediuzzaman furnishes an example with these words: "Situating correctly the pupil of the eye in man's head is possible by knowing its relations with the body, its wondrous duties, and the eye's position in the face of those duties."³³

'Abd al-Qahir and Bediuzzaman do not deny the eloquence of words. We want to point out that it should be understood in this way. Only, they stated that such words should not be considered outside the word-order.

Bediuzzaman agreed with Jurjani and Zamakhshari in the question of basing explanations of the mysteries of word-order on the sciences of rhetoric and semantics. He wrote: "The basis of the Qur'an's miraculousness is the eloquence of the word-order. The eloquence of the word-order is of two sorts: one sort resembles adornment, while the other is like dress. *'Ilm al-bayān* (science of rhetorical style) undertook to expound the first, and situates between the words grammatical and syntactical meanings like smelting gold between stones. As for the latter, *'Ilm al-ma'ānī* (semantics) undertook this; the meanings are cut out from the style in accordance with their stature and sewn from regular pieces; they are instantaneous precious garments, clothed on the story or aim of the words."³⁴

Bediuzzaman draws attention to the aspects of word-order looking to the mind and thought, saying that eloquent speech is that from which the reason and the conscience benefit simultaneously, so that the moment it enters the mind, it flows onto the conscience. It is comparison (*tamthīl*) that guarantees these two aspects, just as it is considered to be the most brilliant mirror to the Qur'an's miraculousness.³⁵... And its basis is allegory (*tashbīh*). The mark of allegory is to stimulate emotions like aversion, desire, inclination, disgust, abomination, astonishment or awe. And sometimes to exalt or insult, arouse desire or cause

30. Faḍl 'Abbās 82.

31. Mustafā al-Ṣāwī al-Juwaynī, *Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān wa Bayān I'jāzihi* (3rd Edn.), Cairo, Dar al-Ma'ārif, 299; see also, Faḍl 'Abbās, 83.

32. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 118-9.

33. *al-Maktūbāt*, 245-6 / *Letters*, 227.

34. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 113.

35. *al-Kalimāt*, 212 / *The Words*, 209.

aversion, confuse or adorn, or to favour, and so on. The conscience is aroused according to the style of the form, and infused with either desire or aversion.³⁶

The Qur'an is the source of eloquence

Bediuzzaman writes that the miraculous eloquence of the Qur'an is "born of the beauty of its word-order, the perfection of its conciseness, the marvels of its style, its singularity and pleasantness, the excellence of its expression, its superiority and clarity, the power and truth of its meanings, and from the purity and fluency of its language."³⁷ He gives a detailed description of these aspects of the Qur'an's miraculousness in the five matters below:³⁸

1. The great beauty of the word-order. Bediuzzaman illustrates this with the following example: in exactly the same way that the hands of a clock which count the seconds, minutes, and hours complement each other, there is order and harmony between the sentences and words of the Qur'an, and order in the relations between them all. He discusses the relations between the parts of the Qur'an when expounding the first part of Sura al-Baqara. He states that there are three sorts of relationship: the relation of the verses with the preceding verses, the order between the sentences, and the parts of all the sentences looking to each other.³⁹

2. The wonderful eloquence of its meanings. It is like this: the Qur'an has afforded power to its meanings, as well as to the excellence of its eloquence and superiority of its expression.

3. The extraordinary purity of its language. The words of the Qur'an possess fluency and eloquence to the utmost degree. Evidence for this is their causing no boredom or weariness, and scholars testifying to this. Verse 145 of Sura Al-i 'Imran is cited as an example, for despite containing all the consonants of the alphabet, this has augmented its beauty.⁴⁰

Stressing that the Qur'an's words also manifest its miraculousness, Bediuzzaman said: "There is no word in the Qur'an which, through its position, it is not related to others, or that its position does not have further relations with other words. Yes, a word anywhere in the Qur'an is like a golden crown over its position. And because of the relationship between them, there is no incompatibility." It is for this reason that it is impossible to translate.⁴¹

4. The excellence of its expression. The levels of the Qur'an's addresses are of the very highest degree, as are the categories of speech it contains, such as encouragement and deterring, praise and restraining, proof and guidance, and informing and making to understand.

5. The extraordinary beauty of its styles. Bediuzzaman gave the 'disjointed letters' as an example of this, and stated that they are Divine cyphers and

36. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 117.

37. *al-Kalimāt*, 424 / *The Words*, 378.

38. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 246-251.

39. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 134-7.

40. See, *al-Itqān*, ii, 122.

41. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 59; *al-Maktūbāt*, 439 / *Letters*, 402.

symbols, and consist of half the number of consonants in the alphabet. He described the original and singular style of *Alif. Lām. Mīm*.⁴²

It was Bediuzzaman's view that the source of its conciseness is the source of its miraculousness. Eloquence is expressing something in conformity with the requirements of a situation. The Qur'an addresses all the levels of humanity in all the different centuries. Holding all the classes and centuries in view, the Qur'an has omitted words and phrases in very many places, so that every level of men will receive its share of the address. In many places it speaks in absolute terms, in order to generalize and distribute. It conveys the word-order in order to contain possibilities which are admirable in the view of rhetoric and acceptable in Arabic, and to increase the aspects. Thus it gives effulgence to all minds in accordance with the capacity of each.⁴³

Bediuzzaman states also that its eloquent style of guidance is one of its aspects of miraculousness, that it has preserved its natural fluency, and that it is free of artificiality.⁴⁴

Repetition in the Qur'an

Bediuzzaman considered repetition—which the ignorant suppose to be a fault—in the Qur'an to be one of its aspects of miraculousness, and he explained the instances of wisdom in it, as follows:

1. The Qur'an is a book of recollection, supplication, and summons. Supplications need to be repeated, and summons too need to be repeated and confirmed.

2. All the short suras are like short versions of the Qur'an. For this reason most of the Qur'an's aims are included in most of the sura's. In this way everyone can benefit from the whole Qur'an, and no one is deprived. Divine unity, the resurrection of the dead, and the Story of Moses are therefore repeated. The Qur'an has four aims according to Bediuzzaman; Divine unity, prophethood, resurrection, and justice.⁴⁵

3. Repetition in the Qur'an conforms with man's repeated spiritual needs.

4. The Qur'an is the founder of the religion of Islam; repetition is necessary for establishing. It is necessary for strengthening, and for corroborating.

5. Also, the Qur'an speaks of matters so vast and truths so subtle that frequent repetition is necessary in various forms in order to establish them in everyone's heart.

As a summary, Bediuzzaman stated that in fact there is no repetition in the Qur'an, that all its verses have numerous meanings, purposes, aspects, and levels, and that at each level the repetitions have different meanings and are for different purposes; the repetition is therefore only apparent.⁴⁶

42. *al-Lama'āt*, 417-8 / *The Flashes Collection*, 346; *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 41-4.

43. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 49, 56, ?

44. *al-Kalimāt*, 528 / *Sözler*, 422-3 / *The Words*, 466-7.

45. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 40.

46. al-Nürsī, Badī'ü'z-Zamān Sa'īd, *Risālat al-Thamara* [trans: Ihsan Qasim al-Salihi], Musul 1985, 81. See also, *al-Kalimāt*, 265-6 / *The Words*, 250; *al-Maktūbāt*, 267-8 / *Letters*, 243-4; *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 39; *Mukhtarāt min al-Mathnawī*, 88.

Are all the parts of the Qur'an at the same degree of eloquence?

Scholars agree that the Qur'an is at the peak of eloquence. However, 'Izz b. 'Abd al-Salam and Abu Nasr al-Qusayri asserted that the Qur'an's eloquence is of various degrees. Qadi defends the opposite of this.⁴⁷

Imam Abu Sulayman al-Khattabi's view was this: miraculousness is concealed within eloquence. Miraculous speech cannot be outside the following three categories: the First: eloquent (*baligh*), firm and with high-sounding quality (*raṣīn*, *jazīl*). The Second: with purity of speech (*faṣīḥ*), close and with simplicity (*qarīb*, *sahl*). The Third: *jā'iz*; *talīq* (eloquent), *rasl*. For those addressed are not of the same class. Like there are city dwellers, who embellish their language, so are there nomads, whose language acquires strength and power due to their way of life.⁴⁸

It is possible that Bediuzzaman was influenced by this idea, for he stated that from the point of view of miraculousness, the styles of the Meccan suras are different to those of the Medinan suras. Those addressed and those who opposed it differed in the two places. The Meccan style is elevated, powerful, miraculous, and persuasive, while in the Medinan styles, the miraculousness is manifest through its simplicity, clarity, and detailedness.⁴⁹

Bediuzzaman grasped the descriptiveness of the Qur'an, was captivated by its beauty, and reached the following conclusion:

"When great beauty of expression is manifested in speech, it transforms non-essential attributes into essentials, meanings into bodies, inanimate creatures into beings with spirit, plants into creatures with intellect. It causes them to converse, and this conversation sometimes leads to enmity and sometimes to love. Lifeless beings dance on the imagination."⁵⁰

Expounding the verse, *And the moon We have determined mansions for till it returns like an old date-stalk, withered and curved* (36:39), Bediuzzaman says:

"It shows through this simile to the eye of the imagination that it is as though there is a tree behind the green veil of the skies, and one of its white, curved, luminous branches has rent the veil and raised its head, and that the Pleiades are like a bunch of grapes on the branch and the other stars are each luminous fruits of that hidden tree of creation."⁵¹

The Qur'an and Poetry

Particularly in the period of Baqillani, the Qur'an's styles were the subject of dispute; they attempted to write poetry to compare with the Qur'an. In the face of this, Baqillani stated the following: the preferable view on the subject of the Qur'an's miraculousness is that its word-order is different to any word-order

47. *al-Itqān*, ii, 123.

48. Abū Sulaymān al-Khattābī, *Bayān I'jāz al-Qur'an* [Tahqiq: M. Z. Salām, M. Khalafullāh], Egypt, Dār al-Ma'ārif, 26.

49. *al-Kalimāt*, 530-2 / *The Words*, 469-70; *al-Thamara*, 87.

50. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 119-120.

51. *al-Kalimāt*, 435 / *Sözler*, 349 / *The Words*, 387.

composed by man, just as its manners of address are different. The Qur'an is neither poetry, nor prose, nor unrhymed verse. It is for this reason too that no one has successfully contested it.⁵²

Bediuzzaman enumerates the reasons for the Qur'an not being poetry, summarizing them in three points:

Firstly: The All-Wise Qur'an's infinitely brilliant and elevated truths are comprehensive, and are therefore independent of the fancies of poetry.

Secondly: The stars of its verses are not restricted by metre, so that each can be a sort of centre to most of the other verses, and a brother, and can form a connecting line with the verses within the sphere encompassing it, so as to be a bond in the relationships which exist between them. It is as if each independent verse has an eye which looks to most of the other verses, and a face turned towards them... See the perfect order within the apparent lack of order!

Thirdly: The mark of poetry is to adorn insignificant, dull facts with big and shining images and fancies, and make them attractive. Whereas the Qur'an's truths are so great, elevated, shining and brilliant, that if the greatest and most brilliant imaginings are compared with them, they remain dull and insignificant beside them.⁵³

This approach of Bediuzzaman's is much firmer and more powerful than Baqillani's.

The ends of the verses (*fāṣila*) in the Qur'an

Bediuzzaman assigned a special discussion on the miraculous aspect of the ends of verses in the Qur'an. He calls these "summaries or extracts (*khulāṣa* or *fadhlaka*; Turkish—*fezleke*). He states that these either consist of the Divine Names or their meanings, or they refer the reader to their reasons to encourage them to dwell on the verse, or they comprise a universal law from among the Qur'an's aims; they are therefore for the purpose of corroborating the verse.⁵⁴ Bearing these characteristics, the summaries are manifestations of the Qur'an's miraculousness. Bediuzzaman draws the following conclusions when discussing the summaries:⁵⁵

1. The Qur'an spreads out before the eyes the acts and works of the All-Glorious Maker. Then it draws out the Divine Names in those works and acts, or it proves the basic aims of the Qur'an. An example is 2:29.

2. The Qur'an unrolls the woven fabrics of Divine art and displays them to the human gaze. Then, in the summaries, it passes over the weaving within the Divine Names, or else refers them to the reason. For example, 10:31-2; 2:164.

3. Sometimes the Qur'an explains God's acts in detail, then it sums them up with a summary. It convinces with the details and commits and binds it to the memory by summarizing it. For example, 12:6; 3:26-7.

52. *Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī*, 208.

53. *al-Kalimāt*, 150-1 / *The Words*, 151.

54. *al-Kalimāt*, 483.

55. *al-Kalimāt*, 484-500 / *The Words*, 428-43; *al-Maktūbāt*, 242 / *Letters*, 224; *Mukhtarāt*, 57.

4. Sometimes the Qur'an mentions the Divine creatures with a particular arrangement of the sentence, then through showing that the creatures are within an order and balance and that they are its fruits, affords a sort of transparency and brilliance. This transparency and brilliance then shows the Divine Names, the manifestation of which is from that mirror-like arrangement. It is as though the above-mentioned creatures are words, and the Names are their meanings, or the seeds of the fruits, or their essences. For example, 23:12, 14; 7:54.

5. The Qur'an sometimes mentions material, particular matters which are subject to change and are the means of various qualities, then in order to transform them into the form of constant truths, summarizes them with constant, luminous, universal Divine Names. Or it concludes with a summary which encourages thought and the taking of lessons. For example, 2:31-2; 16:66-9.

6. Sometimes a verse spreads out dominical decrees over a great multiplicity of things, then it unifies them with a tie of unity which is like a point of unity, or it situates them within a universal rule. For example, *His Throne does extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in preserving them, for He is the Most High, the Supreme* (2:255). 14:32-4.

7. Sometimes in order to disallow causes the ability to create and to show their distance from this, a verse points out the aims and fruits of the effects, so that it may be understood from this that causes are only an apparent veil... By mentioning the aims and results, such verses show that although causes are superficially and as beings joined to and adjacent to their effects, in reality there is a great distance between them. The distance from cause to the creation of the effect is so great that the hand of the greatest of causes cannot reach the creation of the most insignificant of effects. It is within this long distance between cause and effect that the Divine Names each rise like stars... the distance between causes and effects is such that it may be seen only with the light of the Qur'an through the telescope of belief. For example, 80:24-32; 24:43-5.

8. Sometimes in order to make the heart accept God's wondrous works in the hereafter and make the mind affirm them, the Qur'an mentions His amazing works in this world by way of preparation, or it mentions the wondrous Divine works of the future and hereafter in such a way that we acquire firm conviction about them through similar things we observe here. For example, 36:77-83, and Suras Takwir, Infitar, and Inshiqaq.

9. Sometimes the Qur'an mentions certain particular aims, then in order to impel the mind by means of them, confirms, establishes, verifies, and proves the particular aim through the Divine Names, which are like universal rules. For example, the first verses of Suras Mudadala, Isra', and al-Fatir.

10. Sometimes a verse mentions man's rebellious acts, then restrains him with severe threats. Then, so that the severity of the threats should not cast him into despair and hopelessness, it concludes with some Divine Names which point to His mercy, and console him. For example, 17:42-4.

These are fine explanations of the effectiveness of the Qur'anic summaries at the ends of verses, and the eloquence of its word-order. I have compared what

Bediuzzaman wrote on the subject with what Dr. Ahmad Badawi wrote.⁵⁶ Generally, Badawi suffices with describing the relationship of the summary with the verse of which it is a part remaining within the bounds of what Suyuti wrote in his *al-Itqān*. Bediuzzaman discusses the summaries from many angles, describing their relationships with the verses of which they are parts, and revealing their effectiveness in respect of belief, on the spirit, mind, and conscience. He does this by explaining the Divine Names and attributes and the works of Divine art in man's self and in the outside world. These form brilliant replies to the false claims of the British Ministry of Education.

Appreciating the Qur'an's miraculousness

It is Bediuzzaman's view that one who wants to appreciate fully the Qur'an's miraculousness should imagine himself in the age of ignorance and desert of savagery where everything was enveloped in lifeless veils of nature under the darkness of ignorance and heedlessness. Then suddenly he will hear from the elevated tongue of the Qur'an verses like, *Whatever is in the heavens extols and glorifies God* (57:1 etc.) He will see that those dead or sleeping creatures of the world spring to life at the sound of *extols and glorifies*, that they awaken, spring up, and mention God's Names. He can appreciate the subtleties of the miraculousness by visiting that age in his mind. Otherwise, due to over-familiarity, he will not be able to truly grasp the miraculous beauty of all the verses.⁵⁷

And I say that however blunted by familiarity one's perceptions are, the Qur'an continues to pour forth its effulgence through the beauty of its miraculousness. Sayyid Qutb proves this beauty in his work on literary description. On the other hand, dulled hearts cannot reflect the Qur'an's beauty, even if in the Age of Ignorance.

Bediuzzaman favours 'Abd al-Qahir Jurjani's view in the question of appreciating the beauty of the Qur'an's word-order. Jurjani states that this aspect of its miraculousness will not be appreciated by anyone other than those with a sense of art and developed literary taste.⁵⁸

Bediuzzaman also favours Jurjani's view in the question of the expression of the miraculousness. He says: "Sakakki said: 'The miraculousness is dependent on appreciation; it cannot be defined and described. *Man lam yadhuq lam yadri*. That is, it is like honey; one who has not experienced or tasted the miraculousness in his mind cannot understand it from its description....' However, according to the view that 'Abd al-Qahir favours, it is possible to define and describe the miraculousness. And it is this view that I accept."⁵⁹

The other aspects of the Qur'an's miraculousness are as clear as daylight. No one other than those who stop up their ears and deny it out of pride and obstinacy, can deny it.

56. Badawī, Ahmad Ahmad, *Min Balāghat al-Qur'ān*, Cairo, 75-89.

57. *al-Kalimāt*, 505-6 / *The Words*, 447-8.

58. *Dalā'il al-I'jāz*, 349.

59. *al-Kalimāt* 460, 482 / *The Words*, 411, 427; *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 41, 188.

Why the Miraculousness of the Qur'an's eloquence?

The reason Bediuzzaman paid so much attention to the miraculousness of the Qur'an's word-order and eloquence was that he understood that eloquence and fine speech are characteristics of humanity. He says the following concerning this:

"The highest thing that refines man's spirit, the subtlest thing that purifies his conscience, the finest thing that adorns his thought, and the most extensive thing that expands his heart, is a sort of literature. You see this sort to be the most extensive of the sciences, and the most influential and penetrating, the thing closest to his heart; the monarch of the sciences."⁶⁰

Bediuzzaman states that it is not possible to compare the Qur'an with any other work.

"This is because speech is of different categories, and in regard to superiority, power, beauty and fineness, has four sources: one is the speaker, another is the person addressed, another is the purpose, and another is the form.... That is, Who said it? To whom did they say it? Why did they say it? In what form did they say it? ... Since speech draws its strength and beauty from these four sources, if the Qur'an's sources are studied carefully, the degree of its eloquence, superiority, and beauty will be understood."⁶¹

A comparison between Bediuzzaman's and Zamakhshari's expositions on the miraculousness of the Qur'an's word-order

In my opinion, to compare Zamakhshari and Bediuzzaman in the matter of applying the theory of word-order to verses will be more useful than merely recounting Bediuzzaman's use of the sciences of rhetorical style and semantics to explain the miraculous aspects of the Qur'an's word-order. Our aim in making this comparison is to show Bediuzzaman's originality and independence, his profound understanding of the miraculousness of the Qur'an's word-order, and the comprehensiveness of his application of the theory of word-order to verses. I shall take as an example the first five verses of Sura al-Baqara. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, because a Qur'anic commentator pours forth all the burden of his thought in the first sections of his commentary, displaying all his skill. Secondly, because in *Ishārāt al-I'jāz* Bediuzzaman completed only Sura al-Fātiha and the first thirty-three verses of al-Baqara. So to begin the comparison:

*Alif. Lām. Mīm. * Dhālika al-kitāb lā rayba fih muflīhūn. (This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear God; * Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them; * And who believe in the Revelation sent to you, and sent before your time, and [in their hearts] have the assurance of the hereafter. * There are on [true] guidance from their Sustainer, and it is these who will prosper.)(2:1-5)*

*Alif. Lām. Mīm. * Dhālika al-kitāb lā rayba fih.* Both Zamakhshari and

60. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 240.

61. *al-Kalimāt*, 500 / *Sözler*, 400-1 / *The Words*, 443.

Bediuzzaman disclosed many mysteries in the word-order of these verses. But however much they agree on the fine points, they differ in the manner of their evaluation and exposition. According to Zamakhshari, the reason for the demonstrative pronoun—which is used for distant objects—*dhālika* being used is to indicate a completed word. For this reason, allusion is made to such a word by means of the demonstrative pronoun *dhālika*. Zamakhshari explains why although this word is not distant it is indicated to by *dhālika*, and why although the aforementioned “sura” is feminine, a masculine demonstrative pronoun has been used. Bediuzzaman, however, points out that *dhālika* indicates exaltedness and importance, that the Qur'an draws minds to itself like a magnet, and that if referred to the imagination, it is so clear as to be obvious. It alludes through the tongue of disposition to the Qur'an's veracity and to its being free of weakness or trickery. Again, just as this demonstrative pronoun points to the elevatedness of the Qur'an and its perfection, so too by stating that it is far from the road taken by others, it points to the evidence of this claim.

Zamakhshari expounds the relation of *Dhālika al-kitāb* and *Alif. Lām. Mīm*, stating that *Dhālika al-kitāb* expresses the following: “The perfect book is this. As though others were deficient in comparison, only it is worthy of the appellation ‘book.’”

In addition, Bediuzzaman discovers the reason for the term ‘book’ being used. He states that it indicates that the Qur'an cannot be the work of someone unlettered who does not know how to read and write.

Zamakhshari touches on the reason for the adverb (*zarf*) in *la rayba fih* not preceding, explaining it with the example “*Lā fihā ghawl.*” While we see that Bediuzzaman grasps a further subtlety, which is the use of *fī* rather than other adverbs, and the adverbial nature of *fihī*. He states: “The word *fī*, which expresses the adverbial function, indicates that if any doubt or misgiving alights on the surface or outer face of the Qur'an, it can be repulsed by the truths within it.”

Zamakhshari expounds the meaning of *Hudan li'l-muttaqīn*, asking why since those who fear God are anyway on the straight path, does it not say *Hudan li'l-dāllīn* (guidance to the misguidance), and he gives the answer. He also explains why the verbal noun (*maṣḍar*) *hudan* is used instead of the active participle *hādī*, and the verbal noun is indefinite, and the reason for the conciseness of *al-muttaqīn* and why a conjunction is not used between the sentences. Bediuzzaman also stresses these subtle points, but elucidates them in greater detail.

To examine the verse, *Alladhīna yu'minūna bi'l-ghayb wa yuqīmūna al-ṣalat wa mim mā razaqnāhum yunfiqūn.* (Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them;)

Zamakhshari expounds the relation of this verse to those preceding it from the point of view of grammar, and asks these questions on qualifying it with belief in the Unseen (*īmān bi'l-ghayb*): Was it revealed in order to discover and describe those who fear God (*muttaqīn*)? Or did it come together with them, expressing a different meaning? Or was it revealed in order to praise them? He discusses these three possible explanations—being an independent attribute, and

praise for the one qualified by the attribute. Bediuzzaman also dwells on these points. Furthermore, while expounding the fine points of the verse's relationship with the preceding verses, states that the preceding verse is praise of the Qur'an, while the present verse praises the pious, and that the second is the result of the first. He then says:

"As for the relation between *alladhīna* and *muttaqīn*, one is *tahliye* and the other, *tahliya* (adornment). The two are friends, they always follow each other as they do here. Adornment is through good works. And good works are either with the heart or with the body, or with possessions. The sun of good works with the heart is belief, while the index of physical good works is the obligatory prayers. The pole of good works with regard to property is *zakat*, for it is the 'bridge' of Islam."

Unlike Zamakhshari, Bediuzzaman explains why the words *alladhīna yu'minūna* have been preferred to *mu'minūn*, saying: "The verbal form *yu'minūna* has been preferred in place of *mu'minūn* in order to present the act of belief to the eye of the imagination, depict its nature, and indicate the continuance of belief through the manifestation of external evidences."

Again, Bediuzzaman explains the use of the imperfect tense for *Wa yuqīmūna al-ṣalāt*, where Zamakhsharī did not, saying:

"It recalls to those it addresses the far-reaching act of the five daily prayers—which infuse the spirit with life, and that spiritual awakening which spreads throughout the world of Islam. And by depicting for the imagination this fine and orderly situation, it arouses in its listeners the desire to perform the prayers."

Zamakhsharī explains the reason for the (*azamat*) *nūn* (i.e. first person plural) of *rizq* in *Wa mim mā razaqnāhum yunfiqūn* favouring the Mu'tazilite school, to which he belonged. He also expounds the use of the partitive *min* and the reason for the verb preceding the action. Whereas Bediuzzaman expounds the word-order in more comprehensive manner, setting forth fine points which also offer solutions for the problems of the age. He challenges with the institution of *zakat* the socio-economic theories of civilization this age. Then he says the following:

"There are a number of conditions for the giving of *zakat* and alms, which make them acceptable.

"1. Not to be excessive when giving alms, so that the one giving does not himself become needy. The partitive *min* expresses this.

"2. It has to be one's own property and not another's. This is understood from *mim mā* preceding the verb.

"3. The act of giving not being spoilt by imposing a sense of obligation on the recipient. The *nūn* of *razaqnāhum* (i.e. first person plural) expresses this, for the one who gives is God. While His servant is merely the means.

"4. The giving of alms not being abandoned due to fear of poverty. This too is understood from *nūn* in *razaqnāhum*.

"5. Knowing that alms are not restricted to money and property; they include giving to those in need things like knowledge, ideas, strength, and deeds. This is understood from the act being left absolute.

"6. The recipient of the alms should spend them on essential needs, not on dissipation. *Yunfiqūn* makes the spending of alms on essential needs a condition."

Now let us examine the verse, *Wa alladhīna yu'minūna bi mā unẓila ilaika wa mā unẓila min qablik wa bi'l-ākhirati hum yuqinūn*. (And who believe in the Revelation sent to you, and sent before your time, and [in their hearts] have the assurance of the hereafter.)

Here, Zamakhshari asks whether the persons concerned are the same as those who came before them, or whether they are different, and his reply includes both possibilities. He explains the meaning of the conjunction *wa*. In respect of their being different to those who came before, he enquires as to whether or not they are included among the pious (*muttaqīn*), stating that this is tied to the conjunction. In addition, he explains the reason for the use of the perfect tense in *unẓila* although all the Qur'an had not been revealed at that juncture, and the subtlety in the word *al-ākhir* preceding the verb *yūqinūn*, and that verb being constructed on the pronoun *hum*.

In addition to these points, Bediuzzaman expounds the following subtleties: *alladhīna* points to the attribute of belief being the essential aim and object of the statement. *Yu'minūna* being in the imperfect tense indicates that belief is renewed with the repetition of revelation. The vagueness of *mā* indicates that summary belief (*al-īmān al-ijmālī*) is sufficient and that belief encompasses explicit revelation like the Qur'an and implicit revelation like Hadith. The word *unẓila* shows that belief in the Qur'an means belief that the Qur'an was revealed by God. The use of the perfect tense alludes to the fact that the revelation of that which had not yet been revealed was as certain as that which had been revealed. While the use of *ilāyka* rather than *'alayka* indicates that the Noble Prophet (PBUH) accepted and undertook the duty of prophethood voluntarily.

Again additional to what Zamakhshari wrote concerning the word-order of *Wa mā unẓila min qablik*, Bediuzzaman made the following fine points:

"This sentence's reference to what preceded it is either the reference of the thing proven to the evidence, as follows: 'O men! Believe in the previous scriptures as you believe in the Qur'an!' ... or it is the reference of the evidence to the thing proven: 'O People of the Book! Believe in Muhammad and the Qur'an, as you believe in the former Books and prophets!' ... There is the following allusion in this sentence: 'Islam is like a tree which sprang forth from the Qur'an in the Age of Bliss. With its roots established in that age, its rootlets absorbed water and strength from the sources of the water of life of that time, and spread everywhere. So too its branches stretch to the skies of the future, offering fruits, material and non-material, to the world of mankind. Yes, Islam has taken the past and the future under its wings...'"

The sentence also offers encouragement to the People of the Book, and a familiar face and an easy way.

Bediuzzaman corroborates Zamakhshari's statements concerning the verse *wa bi'l-ākhirati hum yūqinūn*, and in addition explains the reason for the use of the conjunction *wa*, the *lām* modifying *ākhir*, and *yūqinūn* being used instead of *yu'minūn*.

As for the verse *Ulā'ika 'alā hudan min Rabbihim wa ulā'ika humu'l-muflihūn* (They are on [true] guidance from their Sustainer, and it is these who

will prosper), Zamakhshari expounds the pronunciation of the case endings, the use of the demonstrative pronoun *ulā'ika*, the meaning of possession in '*ala hudan*, the subtlety of *hudan* being indefinite, *ulā'ika* being repeated, *wa ulā'ika humu'l-muflihūn* being connected with a conjunction to the preceding phrase, the use of the pronoun *hum*, and *al-muflihūn* being definite.

Bediuzzaman stresses the same points, and in addition explains how the verse is joined to the preceding verses and the meaning of *min Rabbihim*, which alludes to the following points: the creation of guidance, and success in it, are from God. Guidance is the mark of dominicality (*rubūbiyya*). Guidance nourishes men the same as sustenance. Bediuzzaman also states that the reason for the absolute sense of *al-muflihūn* is that those addressed are all of different levels and classes and that each requires an aspect of prosperity (*falāḥ*).⁶²

Thus, the above demonstrates Bediuzzaman's profound knowledge concerning the Qur'an's word-order, and the extent to which he comprehended and expounded it. At the same time, it is clear that while expounding the mysteries of the word-order, he made use of these fine points to defend Islam in the face of the materialist and irreligious currents which were opposing it in the age in which he lived. Zamakhshari's point of view on the other hand appears somewhat narrow since he wanted to utilize these points for the benefit of the Mu'tazilite school. Bediuzzaman prefers clear and easily understood language when expounding these subtle points. He also draws attention in particular to the ties and relationships of the phrases and sentences within a single verse. In this way he points out the wonderful order and harmony between the phrases themselves and between the verses that precede them.

Here, I want to say that I agree exactly with what Prof. Dr. Muhsin 'Abd al-Hamid says in the preface he wrote for *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*: "Bediuzzaman observed that the Qur'anic commentators of the past had not applied completely and in detail the theory of word-order, comprehensively so as to include all the Qur'an's suras, verses, phrases and words, and he wanted to write a commentary applying the theory in detailed fashion."⁶³

May God have mercy on Zamakhshari and Bediuzzaman, and on all the scholars of Islam. Amen.

SECOND ASPECT: The Qur'an's comprehensiveness

The Qur'an's comprehensiveness is fivefold:⁶⁴

1. The comprehensiveness in the words. The words of the Qur'an have been positioned in such a way that each phrase, each word even, and even each letter, and sometimes even an omission, has many aspects. Bediuzzaman gives the verse, *And the mountains its pegs* (78:7) as an example. An ordinary person, a poet, a tent-dwelling literary man, a geographer with a literary bent, a sociologist and philosopher of human society, and a scholar of natural philosophy all receive their share from this verse.

63. Muhsin 'Abd al-Hamid, *Muqaddima Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 7.

64. *al-Kalimāt*, 451-467, 881 / *Sözler*, 363-70 / *The Words*, 402-26.

Bediuzzaman is aware of the breadth and comprehensiveness of this aspect, and he puts forward certain conditions for each approach in understanding the verse, so that it should not be interpreted in arbitrary fashion, or misinterpreted. The conditions are these: "It should be approved by the science of rhetoric, be correct Arabic, and in conformity with the Shari'a."⁶⁵

2. The extraordinary comprehensiveness in its meaning. Yes, the Qur'an bestows from the treasures of its meaning, the sources for all the interpreters of the Divine Law (*mujtahids*).

3. The extraordinary comprehensiveness of its knowledge. Yes, the Qur'an has caused to flow forth from the oceans of its own knowledge, the numerous and various sciences of the Shari'a... the true wisdom of the sphere of contingency, the true sciences of the sphere of necessity, and the enigmatic knowledge of the sphere of the hereafter...

4. The extraordinary comprehensiveness of the subjects it discusses: man and his duties, the universe and the Creator of the universe, the heavens and the earth, this world and the hereafter, the past and future, pre-eternity and post-eternity, all the important topics from man's creation out of seminal fluid till when he enters the grave; from the correct conduct of eating and sleeping to the matters of Divine Decree and Determining...

5. The wonderful comprehensiveness of the Qur'an's style and conciseness. This too comprises five points:

a) The Qur'an's style is so comprehensive that a single sura contains the ocean of the Qur'an, which in turn contains the universe. A single of its verses contains the treasury of the sura. And most of the verses are each a short sura, while most of the suras are each a short Qur'an.

b) The Qur'an's verses are comprehensive through their denoting and indicating all the categories of speech and true knowledge and human needs, like command and prohibition, promise and threat, encouragement and deterring, restraint and guidance, stories and comparisons, the Divine ordinances and teachings, the sciences related to the universe, and the laws and conditions of individual human life, social life, the life of the heart, spiritual life, and the life of the hereafter.

c) The Qur'an's miraculous conciseness. Sometimes the Qur'an mentions the two ends of a long chain in such a way that it shows clearly the whole chain. And sometimes in a single word it includes explicitly, implicitly, figuratively, or allusively many proofs of an assertion.

d) The Qur'an's conciseness is so comprehensive that sometimes, through some simple detail or particular event, it shows to simple minds most extensive, lengthy, universal rules and general laws... such as, under the name of 'the teaching of the Names,' all the sciences and branches of knowledge with which the sons of Adam have been inspired.

e) The extraordinary comprehensiveness of the Qur'an in regard to its aims

65. *al-Kalimât*, 881 / *Sözler*, 684; *Râfi'i, I'jâz al-Qur'ân*, 235.

and subjects, meanings and styles, and its subtle qualities and fine virtues. To gather together in one place this many different categories of knowledge and not to cause any dispute or difficulty can only be the work of an overwhelming miraculous order.

I have seen no one apart from Bediuzzaman who has described all these aspects in such wonderful fashion.

THIRD ASPECT: The Qur'an's Miraculousness in respect of knowledge and civilization

Bediuzzaman infers from the revolutions and suffering of mankind that the Qur'an's guidance will come to prevail everywhere. For it preserves the youth and freshness of its first revelation. The people of the present age in particular are in need of the Qur'an, for it is a pre-eternal address to all the classes of mankind.⁶⁶

For example, "This present age and the People of the Book this age, who have more than any other relied on themselves and stopped up their ears to the words of the Qur'an, are so in need of its guiding address of, *O People of the Book! O People of the Book!* that it is as if it addresses this age directly, and the phrase *O People of the Book!* comprises also the meaning of *O People of the Modern Science Books!*" How does the Qur'an show its miraculousness in the face of these? Now, in order to prove the Qur'an's miraculousness in the face of this new disputer "we shall compare the foundations and principles which civilization has taken as its base in order to dispute the Qur'an, and the Qur'anic principles."⁶⁷

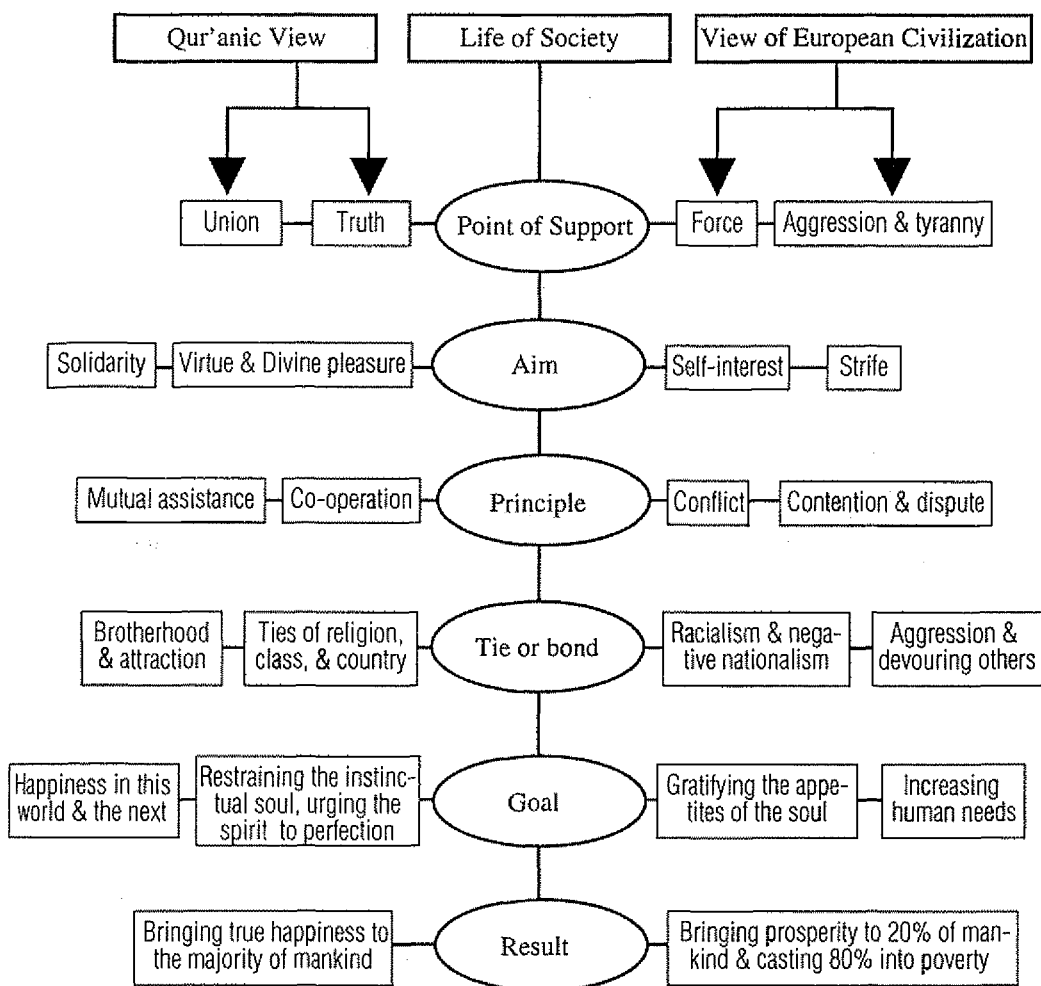
According to Bediuzzaman, the impotence of modern civilization in the face of the Qur'an springs from three points:

The First: He compares what the Qur'an brought in order to secure man's happiness in this world and the next, and what present-day civilization has brought, demonstrating the impotence of civilization based on man's thought. We see that Muslims have clearly and definitely found the right path in this question, and that modern civilization has deviated from the path. For example, the fact that Muslims perform all their actions saying "In the Name of God;" belief in God; the believer's world-view; Divine unity; worship, and foremost the five daily prayers; man's true duties; man selling his self and his possessions to God; belief in God and the hereafter, which solves the riddle of creation; the reality of this world and man's function here; the principles of the resurrection of the dead and the hereafter and their effect on the life of this world; the solving of the purpose and riddle of man's creation and that of the world; the training and disciplining of the soul; proving the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH); Divine Decree and Determining; and such like subjects. In all questions similar to these modern civilization has lost its way, while the Qur'an's miraculousness has been proved.

66. *al-Kalimât*, 880, 471-77 / *Sözler*, 683, 378 / *The Words*, 419-20.

67. *al-Kalimât*, 472 / *Sözler*, 378-9 / *The Words*, 420.

Second Aspect: The comparison between Qur'anic principles and the views and principles of modern civilization on the subjects of the universe and the view of life, moral training, and view of social life in respect of principles, goal, bases, bonds, aims, and results.⁶⁸ The Qur'an's superiority and supremacy over human civilization is demonstrated. The below diagram illustrates Bediuzzaman's comparison in respect of the life of society only.⁶⁹



Third Aspect: This states that since the Qur'anic principles have come from pre-eternity, they will last till post-eternity, not aging like the laws of civilization. For example, by not accepting polygamy, modern civilization has been forced to permit houses of ill-fame. The Qur'anic laws concerning economics, inheritance and such subjects are immutable and eternal.

68. *al-Kalimât*, 141, 144, 508-10 / *The Words*, 143, 145, 450-1.

69. *al-Kalimât*, 145, 472 / *The Words*, 146, 420.

And for example, despite "all its societies for good works, all its establishments for the teaching of ethics, all its severe discipline and regulations," present-day civilization has been unable to contest the Qur'an on two questions; these are the injunction to pay *zakāt* and the prohibition on usury and interest. Bediuzzaman continues:

"Just as the source of mankind's revolutions is a single phrase, so too a single phrase is the origin of all immorality. The first phrase: 'So long as I'm full, what is it to me if others die of hunger.' And the second phrase, 'You work so that I can eat.' Yes, the upper and lower classes in human society, that is, the rich and the poor, live at peace when in equilibrium... The Qur'an, however, eradicates the first phrase with its injunction to pay *zakāt*, and heals it. While it uproots the second phrase with its prohibition on usury and interest."⁷⁰

"Furthermore, just as present-day civilization is defeated before the miraculousness of the Qur'an's wisdom in regard to learning and actions, the same is true for literature and rhetoric."⁷¹

The Qur'an only accepts a civilization which ensures the happiness of everyone, whereas modern civilization has destroyed the happiness of the majority, casting them into hardship and penury.⁷² For these reasons, Bediuzzaman warned the youths of Islam against blind imitation of Europe, which had obscured the truth and inflicted every sort of difficulty on the Muslims, and he called out to what he called the second, corrupt, Europe:

"Know this, O second Europe! You hold a diseased and misguided philosophy in your right hand and a harmful and corrupt civilization in your left, and claim, 'Mankind's happiness is with these two!' May your two hands be broken and may these two filthy presents of yours be the death of you!.. And so they shall be!"⁷³

Bediuzzaman stated that the Qur'an mentions particular events like the teaching of all the Names to Adam (UWP), the slaughtering of the cow in the story of Moses (UWP), and the hearts of the Children of Israel being like stone, or even harder, in order to establish behind them comprehensive laws for human life:

"The particular events in the Qur'an mentioned in the form of historical events are the tips of universal principles." "They are instruction in wisdom of which everyone is all the time in need."⁷⁴

Bediuzzaman explains the mystery of the style as follows:

"Yes, conciseness, one foundation of the Qur'an's miraculousness, and guiding grace and fitting instruction, which are one light of its guidance, require that in the face of ordinary people, who form the majority of those whom the Qur'an addresses, universal truths and profound and general principles are shown in familiar and particular form, and that, due to their simple minds, only the tips of vast truths are shown, and in a simple form, and moreover, that the Divine Disposals, which are wondrous and extraordinary beneath the veil of the commonplace and under the earth, are shown briefly."⁷⁵

70. *al-Kalimāt*, 473-4 / *Sözler*, 380-1 / *The Words*, 421-2.

71. *al-Kalimāt*, 476 / *Sözler*, 382 / *The Words*, 423.

72. *al-Kalimāt*, 856 / *Sözler*, 665.

73. *al-Lama'ât*, 183-4 / *Lem'alar*, 106 / *The Flashes Collection*, 160.

74. *al-Kalimāt*, 271 / *Sözler*, 230 / *The Words*, 255.

75. *al-Kalimāt*, 272 / *Sözler*, 230 / *The Words*, 255.

FOURTH ASPECT: Bediuzzaman and the Islamization of knowledge

It appears that Bediuzzaman's broad view of the Qur'an and his living in a period during which the Islamic Umma experienced an outside threat drove him to acquire complete certainty in both learning and belief, the Qur'an being the fundamental source of various sciences. All these sciences have emerged from the source of light of the Qur'an; their true source is the Qur'an. Briefly, 'the Islamization of knowledge,' the realization of which *al-Ma'had al-'Ālamī li'l-Fikr al-Islāmī* advocates in all corners of the globe, finds fertile ground in Bediuzzaman's thought. Bediuzzaman's expositions on the subjects of the extraordinary comprehensiveness in the Qur'an's discussions, the comprehensiveness of its aims, questions, meanings, styles, and beauty, forms rich and fertile ground for the growth and development of the 'Islamization of knowledge.' One of Bediuzzaman's original ideas on this subject is included in the following:

"The miracles of the other Prophets (Upon whom be peace) each indicate a wonder of human art or craft, and Adam's (Upon whom be peace) miracle indicates in concise form, besides the bases of those crafts, the index of the sciences and branches of knowledge, and of man's attainments and perfections, and urges him towards them. As for the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition, the supreme miracle of Muhammad (PBUH), its showing in detail the reality of the teaching of the Names shows clearly the true goal of the sciences and branches of knowledge, which are truth and reality, and the perfections, attainments and happiness of this world and the next. With truly powerful encouragement, it urges man towards them. It encourages and urges in a way which says:

"O man! In the face of manifestations of dominicality, the elevated purpose of the universe is man's universal worship and submission to God, while man's furthest aim is to attain to that worship by means of those sciences and perfections.' And it states this in such a way that through it it hints: 'At the end of time, mankind will spill into science and learning. It will obtain all its strength from science. Power and rule will pass to the hand of science.'

"Also, since the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition repeatedly puts forward its eloquence and beauty of expression, by allusion it states: 'At the end of time, eloquence and beauty of expression, the most brilliant of the sciences and branches of knowledge, will be most sought after in all their varieties. Even, in order to make one another accept their ideas and carry out their word, men will find their most effective weapon in eloquent expression, and their most irresistible force in fine oratory.' (...)

"**Conclusion:** Since together with alluding to the wonders of present-day human progress, each of the verses about the prophets also has a manner of expression which as though traces their limits in the future; and since each verse's pointing to numerous meanings is certain, indeed, is unanimously agreed upon; and since there are categorical commands to follow and obey the prophets; then together with indicating to the explicit meanings of the above verses, it may be said that they indicate in allusive fashion the important of man's arts and sciences, and urge him towards them."⁷⁶

And for example, in discussing the verse, *And there is not a thing but its*

76. *al-Kalimāt*, 279, 292-3 / *Sözler*, 246 / *The Words*, 272-3.

[sources and] treasures are with Us; but We only send down thereof in due and ascertainable measures (15:21), Bediuzzaman points out that the universal justice and wisdom, which is the greatest manifestation of the Divine Name of All-Just and encompasses the whole universe, turns on economy and frugality, and orders these even. The word "balance" being mentioned four times in Sura al-Rahman leads to the following conclusion:

"So you may understand how basic to human life are the principles of justice, frugality, and cleanliness, which are truths of the Qur'an and Islamic principles. And know how closely connected with the universe are the injunctions of the Qur'an, having spread their firm roots everywhere, and that it is impossible to destroy those truths like it is impossible to destroy the universe and change its form."⁷⁷

Bediuzzaman expounds as follows the verse, *And We sent down iron, in which is [material for] mighty war, as well as many benefits for mankind.* (57:25)

"The Qur'an of Mighty Stature does not want to express the iron which is extracted bit by bit from this small store only as being 'utilized,' but as being sent down together with the globe of the earth from the Supreme Treasury, as a tremendous bounty. That is to say, the thing most necessary for the house of the earth is iron, for when the All-Glorious Creator separated the earth from the sun and sent it down for mankind, He sent down iron together with it, and met most of mankind's needs with it. The All-Wise Qur'an decrees in miraculous fashion: 'Use this iron in your works and try to excavate it and take advantage of it.'"⁷⁸

Bediuzzaman also says: "God expresses through the term 'the teaching of the Names to Adam,' the teaching of all science and knowledge with which mankind has been inspired." "For example, engineering is a science; its reality and final point reaches to God's Names of All-Just and Determiner... Medicine is a science, and also an art; its final point and reality relies on the Absolutely Wise One's Name of Healer..." All the sciences which describe the reality of beings, like physiology, chemistry, botany and biology, are based on the Divine Name of All-Wise.⁷⁹

In many places in the Risale-i Nur, Bediuzzaman stresses this fact, that "As indicated by human needs, the verses of the Qur'an encompass all the branches of science, all true knowledge, all the physical sciences, and the laws and conditions of individual life, social life, the life of the heart, and spiritual life." The words of the Qur'an even possess this characteristic. While expounding the verse, *Say: 'If the ocean were ink [wherewith to write out] the words of my Sustainer, sooner would the ocean be exhausted than would the words of my Sustainer, even if we added another ocean like it, for its aid'* (18:109); he points out this meaning, and says it refers to the Qur'an. The Qur'an is living, pouring forth life.⁸⁰

This view of Bediuzzaman's goes as far as the terms used, for he considers everything in the world around him in accordance with Qur'anic concepts. He

77. *al-Lama'at*, 526 / *Lem'alar*, 291 / *The Flashes Collection*, 400-2.

78. *al-Lama'at*, 423-4 / *The Flashes Collection*, 351.

79. *al-Kalimât*, 290, 291, 463 / *Sözler*, 372, 244-5 / *The Words*, 413, 270-1.

80. *Ishârât al-I'jâz*, 174; *al-Kalimât*, 460, 466, 881; *al-Lama'at*, 420-1 / *The Flashes Collection*, 347-9; *al-Maktûbât*, 247, 439, 506.

therefore refutes ostentatious, empty Western philosophy, which obscures these concepts. For example, the Qur'an says: "The sun is a revolving lamp or lantern."

"Because it does not speak of the sun for itself and its nature, but because it is a sort of spring of an order and centre of a system, and order and system are mirrors of the Maker's skill. It says: *The sun runs its course* (36:38); that is, the sun revolves. Through calling to mind the well-ordered disposals of Divine power in the revolutions of winter and summer, and day and night with the phrase, *The sun revolves*, it gives an idea of the Maker's tremendousness. Thus, whatever the reality of this revolving, it does not affect the order, which is woven and observed, and which is the purpose. It also says, *And set the sun as a lamp* (71:16). Through depicting with the word *lamp* the world in the form of a palace, and that the things within it are decorations, necessities, and provisions prepared for man and living beings, and that the sun also is a subjugated candleholder, it makes known the Creator's mercy and bestowal."

Bediuzzaman says that the Qur'an speaks of the universe in order to make known the Divine Essence, attributes, and Names. It explains the meanings of the book of the universe to make known its Creator. It looks at beings not for themselves, but for their Creator.⁸¹ These concepts should result in a perfection of knowledge, a spiritual pleasure, a human aim, and religious benefits. We see that Bediuzzaman lays great emphasis on this aspect of the Qur'an's miraculousness. He says also,

"Know that the Shari'a of Islam is founded upon rational proofs. It is the summary of the branches of knowledge which comprise in their entirety the vital points of the fundamental sciences. Yes, the Shari'a of Islam is the index of the principles which comprise sciences and branches of knowledge like the refinement of the spirit, the discipline of the heart, the training of the conscience, the nurturing of the body, the economy of the house, the administration of civilized life, the ordering of the world, law, and the conduct and relations of society. (...) Therefore, anyone who is fair-minded will confirm that at all times, and especially in former times, it would have been beyond the power of man [to create] the Shari'a."⁸²

Since this is so, the Qur'an can only be understood in the light of the book of the universe. So too, the book of the universe can only be understood in the light of the Qur'an's principles. Drawing attention to this fact, Bediuzzaman says:

"Yes, the All-Wise Qur'an is the best commentator on the mighty Qur'an of the universe, and its most eloquent interpreter."⁸³

FIFTH ASPECT: The unity of the Qur'an's manner of exposition (The Qur'an's wholeness)

It is understood from what Bediuzzaman has written on this subject that the Qur'an is a complete unity. Each part was revealed to confirm the other parts. They expound each other. There is not the slightest doubt or contradiction in it:

"Furthermore, although the circumstances which prompted the Qur'an's revelation were all different and various, its parts are so mutually supportive that it is as

82. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 172 / *Işârâtü'l-I'caz*, 126-7.

83. *al-Kalimât*, 143 / *Sözler*, 118 / *The Words*, 145; *Mukhtarât*, 61.

though it was revealed in response to only one of them. And although the Qur'an came in response to different and repeated questions, it displays the utmost blending and unity, as though it was the answer to a single question. And although the Qur'an came to explain the requirements of numerous diverse events, it displays such a perfect order that it is as though it explains a single event. And although the Qur'an was revealed through Divine condescension in styles appropriate to the understanding of the innumerable people it would address, whose circumstances were different and diverse, it displays such a fine correspondence and beautiful smoothness of style that it is as though the circumstances were one and the level of understanding the same; it flows as smoothly as water. And although the Qur'an addresses numerous classes distant from one another, it possesses such an ease of exposition, such an eloquence in its word-order, such a clarity in its manner of expression, that it is as though it is addressing a single class. Even, each class supposes that it alone is being addressed. And although the Qur'an was revealed in order to guide and lead to various aims, it possesses such an perfect integrity, such a careful balance, such a fine order, that it is as though the aim was one."⁸⁴

The above is a unique aspect of miraculousness. I have seen no one apart from Bediuzzaman who has pointed it out. Truly, the Qur'an is an harmonious whole. Nothing vain can approach it. It was revealed by the All-Wise One, to Whom all praise is due. To dispute it is certainly a great error. This is one of the most important principles in relations with it.

SIXTH ASPECT: The Qur'an's setting forth a middle way

Bediuzzaman discussed this aspect of its miraculousness independently. He means the following by this aspect:

"Preserving all the degrees of all the areas of Divine unity together with all their necessities, and explaining them, it has preserved their balance and not spoilt it. It has preserved the balance of all the exalted Divine truths. It has brought together all the ordinances dictated by the Divine Names, preserving their mutual proportion. It has brought together the dominical and Divine acts with perfect balance. Thus this preserving and balance and bringing together is a characteristic which is certainly not present in man's works..."⁸⁵

"The Qur'an's verses see and show in detail each of the six pillars of belief in respect of this world and the hereafter, action and knowledge. They see and show intentionally and seriously all the five pillars of Islam, and all the principles which ensure happiness in this world and the next. They preserve their balance, perpetuate their proportion, so a form of the Qur'an's miraculousness comes into being from the beauty which is born of the mutual proportion of the entirety of those truths. It is due to this great mystery that although the scholars of theology are students of the Qur'an and one section of them has written thousands of works of ten volumes each on the pillars of belief, because like the Mu'tazilites they preferred the reason to transmitted knowledge, they have not been able to express with clarity so many as ten of the Qur'an's verses, or prove them decisively, or convince seriously concerning them."⁸⁶

84. *al-Kalimât*, 481-2 / *Sözler*, 385 / *The Words*, 427.

85. *al-Kalimât*, 512 / *Sözler*, 409 / *The Words*, 453.

86. *al-Kalimât*, 514 / *Sözler*, 411 / *The Words*, 455-6.

Bediuzzaman also says that despite that great revolution,

"The truths of the Shari'a that Muhammad (PBUH) brought preserved the balance of the natural laws. It did not spoil the relations necessary to bond society; as time progressed, they became unified. It is understood from this that Islam is the natural religion for human kind, and the sole factor preserving society from upheaval."⁸⁷

"... the perfect order and balance and beauty of the proportion and soundness of the Greater Shari'a of Islam, which has emerged from the decisive statements, senses, indications, and allusions of the comprehensive Qur'an; they form an irrefutable and decisive proof and just witness that cannot be doubted. This means that the expositions of the Qur'an cannot be attributed to man's partial knowledge..."⁸⁸

While there are such marvellous expositions available, I cannot understand why al-Zarkani considered this aspect of the Qur'an's miraculousness to be defective.⁸⁹

SEVENTH ASPECT: The Qur'an's being an adjudicator

Bediuzzaman says the following about this aspect of the Qur'an's miraculousness:

"One wing of the Qur'an is in the past, and one is in the future, and like its root and one wing are the agreed truths of the former prophets, and it confirms and corroborates them, and they too confirm it unanimously, so too all the true Sufi paths and ways of sainthood whose fruits like the saints and purified scholars, who receive life from the Qur'an, show through their vital spiritual progress that their blessed tree is living, effulgent, and the means to truth, and who grow and live under the protection of its second wing, testify that the Qur'an is pure truth and the assembly of truths and in its comprehensiveness, a matchless wonder."⁹⁰

"The Qur'an combines in itself the virtues of all the previous scriptures and the essentials of all the previous religions; it is thus a modifier and a perfecter."⁹¹

The Qur'an's taking under its wings the past and the future, is evidence of its observation of them. While its modifying and perfecting the truths of the previous revealed books proves that it is an adjudicator. The great majority of scholars and saints receiving their instruction from it, proves its sovereignty. The most important point in regard to this, besides aspects looking to life and actions, is its aspect of knowledge and learning.

EIGHTH ASPECT: The Qur'an's giving news of the Unseen

The news the Qur'an gives of the Unseen is of three sorts (not four as is stated in Letters —*al-Mektûbât*— page 144). These are: information it gives about the past; the Qur'an recounts numerous events that occurred from the time of Adam till that of the Prophet (PBUH). Predictions concerning the future; these include predictions that the Prophet (PBUH) would be protected, his enemies would be

87. *Ishârât al-I'jâz*, 170 / *İşârâtü'l-I'caz*, 124-5.

88. *al-Kalimât*, 154-5 / *Sözler*, 126-7 / *The Words*, 154.

89. Muhammad 'Abd al-'Azîm al-Zarkânî, *Manâhil al-'Irîfân fî 'Ulûm al-Qur'ân*, Cairo, ii, 309.

90. *al-Kalimât*, 520 / *Sözler*, 417 / *The Words*, 461-2; *al-Âyat al-Kubrâ*, 86 / *The Supreme Sign*, 76.

91. *Ishârât al-I'jâz*, 59 / *İşârâtü'l-I'caz*, 53.

defeated, the Byzantines would defeat the Sassanids, the Muslims would conquer Mecca and enter the Sacred Mosque. And information it gives about the Divine truths, cosmic truths, and matters to do with the hereafter.⁹²

When describing the predictions concerning the Unseen in Sura al-Fath, Bediuzzaman says:

"The flashes of this sort of miraculousness which gives news of the Unseen, which is one sort of the Qur'an's miraculousness, are so numerous as to be incalculable. Externalist scholars restricting them to forty or fifty verses is due to their superficial view. In reality they number more than a thousand. Sometimes there are four or five aspects giving news of the Unseen in a single verse."⁹³

Bediuzzaman describes another sort of the Qur'an's giving news of the Unseen, which proves its miraculousness, in his work in 'semi-verse', *Lemeât*:

"It warns mankind with stories it relates as accurately as a witness in a unique and meaningful style, it warns mankind with them. What it relates is this: it tells of events both that occurred in early times and will occur at the end of time, and of the secrets of Hell and of Paradise. It relates stories about the truths of the Unseen, and the mysteries of the Manifest Realm, the Divine mysteries, and the relations of being, stories that are clear and plain, and that have been neither refuted nor denied by logic. If logic does not accept them, it still cannot refute them. The revealed scriptures, which are sought after by all the world. It relates faithfully the points on which they are agreed, and corrects those about which they are at odds."⁹⁴

There is a relation between these expositions and the previous aspect, which is this: personally I do not agree with Bediuzzaman when he says: "For scholars of its inward meanings (*bâtin*), the Qur'an from beginning to end consists of news and predictions concerning the Unseen."⁹⁵ Because "*'ulamâ' al-bâtin*" is not a term accepted by scholars. Also one should avoid such dualities, because it is one of the matters which mislead the Umma. It is because of these that dualities like this have arisen with us Muslims, '*ulamâ' al-zâhir*' and '*ulamâ' al-bâtin*', this world and the hereafter, science and religion.

NINTH ASPECT: The Qur'an's addressing all classes and levels of mankind

Bediuzzaman was asked why the Qur'anic commentators differed on the subject of *tarkīb* aspects of the Qur'an. He replied: "One of the aspects of the Qur'an's miraculousness is that its word-order is in a style which is in conformity with all ages and all levels of men."⁹⁶

The Qur'an has preserved its youth and freshness and,

"It is as though the All-Wise Qur'an is every century turned directly towards each of the classes of humanity, and addresses each particularly. Indeed, it is essential that the Qur'an, which summons all mankind with all its classes and instructs them

92. *al-Kalimât*, 468-71, 881 / *Sözler*, 376-8 / *The Words*, 416-9; *al-Thamara*, 83.

93. *al-Lama'ât*, 49 / *Lem'alar*, 31 / *The Flashes Collection*, 52.

94. *al-Kalimât*, 882 / *Sözler* 685.

95. *al-Kalimât*, 469 / *Sözler*, 376 / *The Words*, 416.

96. *Ishârât al-I'jâz*, 49 / *Işârâtü'l-I'caz*, 42; *al-Thamara*, 83.

in belief, the highest and most subtle science, and in knowledge of God, the broadest and most luminous branch of learning, and in the laws of Islam, which are the most important and various of the sciences, should instruct every class and group appropriately. What it teaches, however, is the same; it does not differ. In which case, there have to be different levels in the same lesson. According to its degree, each class takes its share from one of the veils of the Qur'an."⁹⁷

The Qur'an deprives no one of its miraculousness.

"Thus there is Divine condescension to the minds of men, so that it should be familiar for them. Variety in the styles of revelation, again for familiarity, the thing loved by men and jinn."⁹⁸

"... It neglects no one. Even for those who can comprehend only what their eyes see and who have no ear to hear with, no heart to feel with, and no knowledge to judge with, the Qur'an alludes to its miraculousness in a fashion... many of the words look to one another. For example, if a needle is passed through the word 'dog' in the phrase 'they were seven, the dog being the eighth' in Sura al-Kahf (18:22) and through the underlying pages, with a slight deviation it will go through the word 'Qitmir' in Sura al-Fatir (35:13), thus establishing the dog's name."⁹⁹

It seems to me to be artificial and excessive to prove the Qur'an's miraculousness to someone who only believes what his eyes see. Because evidences of this sort can be eliminated by altering the arrangement when printing. On the other hand, it is not the purpose of the Qur'an, to be occupied with such things, as Bediuzzaman himself stated.

TENTH ASPECT: The Qur'an's founding a religion and changing life

The Qur'an founded a religion which had no like in the past, neither will it have any like in the future.

"It holds this earth of ours, rotating it in its annual and daily rotations; a heavenly thread. It weighed heavily on the globe, and it mounted it. It does not give up its rebellion."¹⁰⁰

"The Qur'an caused a transformation in social life in this world in so luminous, happy, and truthful a fashion, and brought about such a revolution in both men's souls, and hearts, and spirits, and minds, and in their personal lives, social lives, and political lives, and continued and directed that revolution... it has trained men, purified their souls and cleansed their hearts, and it has caused spirits to unfold and progress, given direction and light to minds, and life and happiness to life. For sure, such a book has no like; it is a wonder, a marvel, a miracle."¹⁰¹

ELEVENTH ASPECT: No one having been able to dispute the Qur'an, despite the length of time since it was revealed

"For thirteen centuries there has been the desire to surpass it in the Qur'an's penin-

97. *al-Kalimāt*, 478 / *Sözler*, 383 / *The Words*, 424; *al-Maktübāt*, 238-40.

98. *al-Kalimāt*, 882 / *Sözler*, 685.

99. *al-Maktübāt*, 240-1 / *Mektûbat*, 214 / *Letters*, 222-3.

100. *al-Kalimāt*, 883 / *Sözler*, 685.

101. *al-Kalimāt*, 518 / *Sözler*, 415 / *The Words*, 460; *al-Āyat al-Kubrā*, 83.

sula, and the desire to imitate it in its friends. Millions of Arabic books have been written due to these two intense desires. If they were to be compared with revelation, even the most common man would judge that they were written by man, and the Qur'an was revealed. The Qur'an left open the door, and throughout this long time, disseminated its contents. It invited minds and spirits to itself. Nevertheless, man has been unable to contest it. The time of testing has now passed."¹⁰²

I say, however, that this challenge will persist till the end of time.

TWELFTH ASPECT: The Qur'an's miraculousness in respect of knowledge

Bediuzzaman also discusses the discoveries of modern science, and is of the view that the Qur'an does not neglect this subject. For the Qur'an addresses all mankind. It alludes to this in two ways. One is through the miracles of the prophets, and the second is while setting forth historical events. Bediuzzaman is also of the opinion that research in this matter requires great care.¹⁰³

He touches on the subject when expounding the words "*ra'd*" (thunder) and "*barq*" (lightning):

"They are two clear signs in the hands of the angels from the World of the Unseen appointed with the ordering of the laws in the world of the clouds. Then, Divine wisdom tied causes to effects. On the clouds being formed from the water vapour dispersed through the atmosphere, some become charged with negative electricity and some with positive electrons. When these come close to each other, they suddenly clash and lightning occurs. Then, due to their combining, suddenly changing places and the place of one being filled by another, since there can be no vacuum, a vibration occurs, the layers of cloud undulate, and thunder occurs. These occur under the law and order represented by the angels of thunder and lightning."¹⁰⁴

The Risale-i Nur is full of examples of this kind of miraculousness.

THIRTEENTH ASPECT: The Qur'an shows the way to knowledge of God

"There are three great and universal things which make known to us our Sustainer: one is the Book of the Universe... Another is the Seal of the Prophets (Upon whom be blessings and peace), the supreme sign of the Book of the Universe..."¹⁰⁵

The third is the Qur'an.

It is understood from this that the most important of all knowledge is knowledge of the Maker, the greatest obligation on God's servants and the source of knowing other truths. The sources of knowledge of God are two: one is revelation and the other is the universe. The universe, that is, the senses, experience, and observation. This is an approach that has to be understood and developed in order to be profited from in the field of training and instruction.

102. *al-Kalimāt*, 883, 503, 504 / *Sözler*, 686; *al-Itqān*, ii, 122.

103. *al-Kalimāt*, 277-8 / *Sözler*, 235-6 / *The Words*, 260.

104. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 141.

105. *al-Kalimāt*, 254 / *Sözler*, 219 / *The Words*, 243.

Bediuzzaman states that there is no over-crowding among these ways of miraculousness.¹⁰⁶ He believes that they are inexhaustible and what he had expounded constituted only a brief discussion, which did not do justice to the subject.

So long as the world continues, new miraculous aspects will become apparent, and not only time will expose them, deep study and thought, and particularly living in the Qur'an's atmosphere, will allow the performance of this service.

Doubts concerning the Qur'an's Miraculousness

Bediuzzaman did not turn a blind eye to the doubts about the Qur'an that atheists aroused this century, on the contrary, he was extremely alert to them. He stressed that the Qur'an defends itself and enacts its decree.¹⁰⁷

Bediuzzaman deals with the most important of these doubts. As follows:

The first: the Qur'an's containing obscurities and allegorical passages, the true meanings of which are not understood, is not contrary to miraculousness. For its miraculousness is based on its eloquence, and eloquence is based on clarity of expression..

The second: questions concerning the creation have been left vague and absolute, and the physical sciences are only briefly mentioned, and this is opposed to guidance and instruction.

The third: certain of its verses are apparently contrary to reason, which gives the idea that they are contrary to reality; this is opposed to the Qur'an's veracity.¹⁰⁸

Bediuzzaman replies as follows: the Qur'anic styles are in conformity with the understanding of the mass of people. It condescends to the human mind, so that ordinary people can understand it. That is why it contains comparison and allegory.

When expounding *And He fashioned them as seven heavens*, he confirms this fact as follows:

"The extremely comprehensive addresses, meanings, and allusions of the All-Wise Qur'an conforming to and flattering all levels of men from the lowest to the saints, on their studying them carefully, is truly astonishing. In accordance with their capacities, persons of every sort have received their share from the Qur'an's effulgence manifested in this verse."¹⁰⁹

However, there is an ambiguity in Bediuzzaman saying: "The difficulty of the things they call 'difficult' arises from the depth and subtlety of the meaning due to the conciseness and elevatedness of the style; the Qur'an's difficulties are of this sort."¹¹⁰ Because difficulty stems from [the levels of] comprehension. It is not from the Qur'an itself. For example, look at the verses they say are difficult,

106. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 179.

107. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 174; *al-Kalimāt*, 878.

108. *İşârâtü'l-I'cāz*, 130.

109. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 227 / *İşârâtü'l-I'cāz*, 218.

110. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 175.

you will see that they put forward different reasons for the difficulties and differ as to their number. In which case, the difficulties arise from lack of knowledge and inadequate understanding on their part. The Qur'an is far above obscuring its words and making them difficult to understand.

Bediuzzaman answers the second doubt as follows: if the Qur'an had spoken at that time in detailed fashion about the physical sciences, it would have caused great confusion to the mass of people. The best approach is to speak in accordance with people's understanding.

As for the third doubt, he says:

"The Qur'an has four aims. Discussion of the universe in the Qur'an is to deduce by means of the universe's wondrous order and regularity and Divine art, the existence of the True Orderer; it is therefore of only secondary importance."¹¹¹

"In short: since the Qur'an was revealed for all men in all times, these three matters they adduce to be doubts, are evidence, not for the Qur'an's deficiency, but for its elevated miraculousness. Yes, I swear by God Almighty, Who teaches the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition, that the insight of that Warner and Giver of Good News was exempt from inability to differentiate between reality and imagination, and his way, far above deceiving people and ensnaring them with false argument."¹¹²

Bediuzzaman deals with a number of doubts about the Qur'anic styles in the same way, demolishing them entirely. For example, "With His grandeur and tremendousness, how does God condescend to speak with men in the way that they speak?" Bediuzzaman replies:

"God's will, knowledge, and power are universal, general, comprehensive, and all-encompassing. The measure of His tremendousness is only the totality of His works. For instance, can it be said of the sun at a time its light fills the whole world and a little particle is benefiting from its light: 'Why does it busy itself with this insignificant particle, giving it its light?' ... In short: it is obvious that small things and commonplace acts, like the particle, are within the bounds of the Creator's knowledge, since they come into existence through His creativity. So, clearly, there can be no dispute when discussing them. ... Since the Qur'an addresses man, it clothes its styles in a garment blended with man's senses and its speaks in his accent, so that he should not shy away from its words with his understanding. Yes, when someone lofty speaks with a child, he speaks in the child's style, so his mind is flattered..... The purpose of the Qur'an's revelation is to guide the mass of people, and the masses are not learned. They cannot see the naked truth, and cannot comprehend pure reason and abstract matters. Thus, through His grace and bounty, God displays the truths in a dress and style with which they are familiar, so that they do not regard it as strange and shy away from it."¹¹³

111. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 176-7; *al-Kalimāt*, 266 / *The Words*, 251-2.

112. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 177 / *Işârâtü'l-I'caz*, 135.

113. *Ishārāt al-I'jāz*, 202-4 / *Işârâtü'l-I'caz*, 178-82.

Conclusion

There are a number of important points to be noted concerning Bediuzzaman's proofs and exposition of the Qur'an's miraculousness. In particular it is necessary to consider the background to his writing. As we stated before, his starting point was the attacks on the Qur'an and his answers to these attacks. Religious scholars have tended to expound the Qur'an's miraculous in detail to the Arabs, and summarily to non-Arabs. Bediuzzaman, however, expended great effort to explain in detail all aspects of the miraculousness to all humanity.

It is true that Bediuzzaman was influenced by earlier scholars, but we have to admit that he defined important new limits in the subject, which had not been touched on previously. Although he appreciated 'Abd al-Qahir Jurjani and his theories on the Qur'an's word-order, he did not remain within the limits he defined, on the contrary, he expounded in detail another matter that emerged from the theory. That was the question of the relations between words. Bediuzzaman attached great importance to this, applying it comprehensively to the verses he expounded. So much so that he surpassed Zamakhshari in the subject. The relations are three: the relations between verses, those between the phrases or sentences of a single verse, and the relation between the elements of the phrases and sentences. That is, the relation between the words and parts of the same sentence, and between the meaning. It is a very fine and important addition to the theory of word-order, for understanding the mystery of the Qur'an's miraculousness.

In the same way, together with expressing his admiration for 'Abd al-Qahir Jurjani Bediuzzaman did not imitate him in making do with only a single aspect of the Qur'an's miraculousness, that is, he did not accept the theory of word-order to be the only measure in the subject.

One should draw attention to a further side of Bediuzzaman's, that is, his disclosing a number of new and original aspects of the miraculousness. For example, his pointing out the miraculousness in the question of knowledge and civilization; his stressing the unity of the sciences of the Qur'an; his stating that the Qur'an is a fundamental source of knowledge and science; his expositions of the wholeness and harmony of the Qur'an; his stating that it is the adjudicator of all the revealed religions.

Bediuzzaman provided fine, new examples for each of the aspects of its miraculousness, and even for the sub-sections of these aspects, not sufficing with those repeated by former scholars in their expositions.

Looking at other works on the subject, we see that their authors tried to demonstrate the Qur'an's miraculousness to those at the level of scholars. They addressed only scholars, not taking into account others. But I saw that differently to them, Bediuzzaman shows great concern to address the ordinary people. His repeatedly stating that the ordinary people too can understand the Qur'an and that this too is a miracle, is striking. What is the reason for the concern he shows ordinary people? Doubtless, Bediuzzaman is a fine example of a 'learned guide.'

For he endeavoured to raise the level of the ordinary people, so that many of them might understand the Qur'an and its meanings, and by rising to this level, win happiness in both this world and the next.

Bediuzzaman's expositions on the subject of miraculousness concentrate on two points in particular. The first is the miraculousness of the Qur'an's eloquence (*bayānī i'jāz*), and the second, that concerning knowledge and civilization in the face of the West and materialist philosophy. As Bediuzzaman asked, what can be the role of the miraculous eloquence, when people's command of language is impaired due to non-Arabs becoming Arabized, and mixing with the Arabs, coming to surpass them in the art of words? Being a learned guide, Bediuzzaman believed that the prime necessity in instruction is method and principle. And the best way of this is eloquence and literature. For these are characteristics of humanity. It is this sort of literature that best trains the human spirit, purifies the conscience, adorns thought, and expands the heart. It is because of this that you see it to be the most widespread and influential sort of literature, and closer to the human heart, as though it was the monarch of the sciences. Bediuzzaman stresses the importance of eloquence and its effect on the mind and conscience. It is for these reasons that Bediuzzaman attached the greatest importance to this aspect of miraculousness.

We see that Bediuzzaman followed two methods when expounding the miraculousness of eloquence (*bayānī i'jāz*). The first: providing adequate evidence and proof. His brilliant commentary on Sura al-Fatiha and the first thirty-three verses of al-Baqara furnish a fine example of this method. Secondly: repulsing all doubts that could be levelled at this aspect. For example, we saw his convincing explanations of repetition in the Qur'an, and how the Qur'an is above being poetry. It seems to me that Bediuzzaman was more successful in doing this than al-Baqillani, whose work, *I'jāz al-Qur'an*, is for the most part dedicated to criticism and analysis of poetry and to demonstrating the Qur'an's superiority to poetry. For in this matter Baqillani was excessive. If instead he had expounded the beauty of the Qur'an's word-order, he would have performed a more useful service.

Again, we saw Bediuzzaman's fine expounding of the ends of the verses. Not sufficing with only describing the relationship of the end of the verse with the verse of which it is a part, he demonstrated that on the contrary, these summaries comprise fundamental principles concerning belief in God and His attributes, and prove the universal aims of the Qur'an; he explained their psychological effects on man's heart and conscience and their effects on belief. I have seen no one else produce such excellent and original expositions.

To come to the Qur'an's miraculousness in the question of knowledge and civilization. Bediuzzaman succeeded in grasping this aspect and proving it, and in silencing objections to the Qur'an in this age when it is under attack, and in proving the corrupt nature of western civilization, showing how, obscuring truth and reality, it has dragged mankind into misguidance. While doing this, Bediuzzaman made reality speak, and in the face of the Islamic Umma abandoning

God's Shari'a and system and its imitating the West, expressed the reality with regret and sorrow. His words are a clear call to again situate the Qur'an within life and learning, and to restore it to its position of being the greatest authority in rectifying the belief and culture of the Umma and establishing civilization.

By explaining that the social, human, and natural sciences had emerged from the source of light of the Qur'an and that they are based on the Divine Names, Bediuzzaman was one of the most important propounders of the idea of the 'Islamization of knowledge.' For this reason I consider it essential that a bridge is established between Bediuzzaman's ideas and '*al-Ma'had al-'Ālamī li'l-Fikr al-Islāmī*.'

Bediuzzaman's ideas on the miraculousness of the Qur'an are so realistic and vital that it is easy to apply them to daily life. This is possible by researching into his ideas, developing them and constructing new ideas on them and not petrifying them. This nation, which for centuries carried the banner of Islam, can, taking Bediuzzaman as an example in withstanding materialist western civilization, establish once again the principles of the Qur'an, as in its glorious history; it has the capability to do this.

In Short: The Qur'an will continue to be a source of energy for scholars, its wonder-arousing mysteries will not be exhausted, it will continue to adjudicate all books and knowledge, and scholars will continue to comment on its freshness and newness.

I found a rich mine of ideas in Bediuzzaman's works. Each of his ideas may be considered to be an aspect of the Qur'an's miraculousness. I do not know whether or not I have been able to express what I intended in this paper.

O my Sustainer! I praise You and declare You free of all defect. I testify that there is no god but You! I seek Your forgiveness and I turn to You.

* * *