

Is Muhammad ﷺ Truly
a Prophet of God?

Sami Ameri

Contents

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE QUESTION	1
WHY THIS BOOK?	4
FIRST CHAPTER	7
<i>Preface to Testing the Truthfulness of Islam</i>	
Preface	9
Section 1: The Need for Prophethood	11
Prophethood: Bestowed? Or earned?	13
Knowledge of God via acquisition and reason	14
Salvation and the way to understanding	16
Deism and its theoretical problems	20
The special feature of Prophethood and divine justice	23
Deism and its problem with the credibility of logic and moral perfection	25
Deism and the problem of evil	28
What about Christianity?	33
Summary	34
Further reading	35
Section 2: Miracles and the Proof for Prophethood	37
Are miracles a condition for Prophethood?	39
Are miracles possible and perceptible?	41
Spinoza's criticisms	41
Hume's criticisms	44
The testimony of natural law against miracles	45

Summary	52
Further reading	53
Section 3: Putting the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ to the Test	55
Muhammad ﷺ? Or someone else?	57
Why should Muhammad's Prophethood ﷺ be put to the test first?	57
Does researching Muhammad's Prophethood ﷺ render investigations of other Prophethoods redundant?	59
Signs that reveal a true Prophet	60
 SECOND CHAPTER	 63
<i>Indicators in the Sīrah for the Truthfulness of the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ</i>	
Preface	65
Section 1: The First Condition for Prophethood: Preservation of His Career and the Substance of His Message	67
A preserved corpus? Or a heap of ignorance and fables?	69
Preservation of the <i>sīrah</i> does not open the debate—it ends it	70
The Prophet of Islam—a known man among unknown men	72
Key sources of the <i>sīrah</i>	75
i. The Holy Qur'an	76
ii. Books of hadith, <i>sīrah</i> , <i>shamā'il</i> (sublime characteristics), and <i>dalā'il</i> (indicators of Prophethood)	79
The wisdom of the Islamic approach in judging the veracity of narrations	85
The Orientalists' alternative approach	96
Comparing the two approaches	102
What about Christianity?	105
Summary	111
Further reading	113
 Section 2: The Second Condition for Prophethood: Moral Perfection	 115
A moralist's perfection? Or an opportunist's deception?	117
1. Moral uprightness as proof for Prophethood	119
2. Honesty as proof for Prophethood	129

a. Reality's attestation	131
b. His followers' attestation	133
c. His adversaries' attestation	134
Did the Prophet of Islam possess a worldly interest?	135
The Prophet of Islam's supplications and what they tell us about his inner state	139
What of the traits of the Prophet of Islam that have been criticised?	142
Rejecting Muhammad's Prophethood without rejecting the Prophethood of the Christian Prophets is invalid	148
What about the Christian and Biblical conception of Jesus?	149
Summary	162
Further reading	163
Section 3: Tangible Miracles of the Messenger ﷺ	165
Attestable miracles? Or mere rumours?	167
Mass transmission is the highest proof for the occurrence of the miracle	168
Technical mass transmission for the miracles of the Prophet of Islam	172
The mass transmission of specific miracles	175
a. 'Ammār's murder and the transgressive crowd	176
b. A tree trunk's weeping saudade	178
Objection: Did the Qur'an not negate miracles from the Prophet of Islam?	179
What about the miracles of the Biblical Jesus?	184
Summary	187
Further reading	188
Section 4: What Has the World Gained from the Mission of Muhammad ﷺ?	189
Evidence-based enlightenment? Or misguided darkness?	191
History speaks	193
Guidance and light	195
Monotheism and the glorification of God	199
Biblical criticism	205
The importance of worldly knowledge	208

Empiricism	212
What did Muslims offer the world?	217
When Muslims submitted themselves to the Qur'an, where was the West vis-à-vis the East?	220
Rights of women	221
What about Christianity?	224
Summary	231
Further reading	232
THIRD CHAPTER	233
<i>Indicators in the Qur'an for the Truthfulness of the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ</i>	
Preface	235
Section 1: Rhetorical Inimitability	237
A poet's ingenuity? Or an extraordinary miracle?	239
Assessing the inimitability of the Qur'an	241
1. The Qur'an and poetry	243
2. Is the Qur'an a miraculous phenomenon or merely a rare piece of literature?	247
3. Did Qur'an reach the highest point of inimitability?	261
4. Is rhetorical inimitability still applicable today?	264
5. Is the position of Qur'anic inimitability merely a faith-based claim?	269
i. Testimony of the Pagan Arabs	270
ii. Christian testimony	271
iii. Jewish testimony	276
What about the rhetorical and expressive aspect of the Bible?	278
Summary	280
Further reading	281
Section 2: The Qur'an is a Supernatural Phenomenon	283
The Qur'an: From a human? Or from heaven?	285
1. Is the Qur'an a concocted book?	286
a. Is the Qur'an the handiwork of a most egregious liar?	287
b. The book that bled the heart of the Prophet ﷺ, the one calling to Allah through it	289
c. The Qur'an as a singular coherent piece	291

d. A double-tongued man?	296
e. A man with two hearts?	299
f. Emphasis on the humanness of the Prophet	304
2. Is the Qur'an the book of an unstable man?	306
a. Was the Prophet of Islam epileptic?	307
b. Physical trauma associated with Revelation and the ingenuity of the Qur'anic text	310
What about Christianity?	312
Summary	318
Further reading	319
Section 3: Inimitability in the Qur'an Vis-à-vis the Imperceptible	321
The Qur'an: Speculation on the unseen? Or tearing down the veil of the unseen?	323
Conditions for admissible prophecies	326
Qur'anic prophecies	327
Prophecies in the Prophetic tradition	343
i. Prophecies coming true before the compilation of hadith	344
ii. Prophecies coming true after the compilation of hadith	347
What about the prophecies of the Bible?	349
Summary	355
Further reading	356
Section 4: The Qur'anic Miracle of Knowing About the Jews and Christians and Their Affairs	357
The mention of details the Prophet had not seen: A miracle? Or plagiarism?	359
The Makkani Polytheists negating that the Prophet of Islam gained knowledge of stories from the Bible without a teacher	362
a. The Qur'an establishing its divinity by concurring with information held by the People of the Book	363
b. The People of the Book challenging the Prophet of Islam to mention what they know from their books	365
c. The Makkans assuming that the similitude is because the Prophet ﷺ was taught	368
Nullifiers of the claim of knowledge acquisition via the reports of the People of the Book	370

The unletteredness of the Messenger ﷺ	371
Linguistic testimony	373
The Qur'an's testimony	377
The Prophetic career	378
Testimony from the Prophetic career	379
Testimony of the Messenger ﷺ	381
The Messenger ﷺ employing scribes for Revelation and other matters	382
Parlance in the Arab environment during Prophethood	383
The scope of requisite intellectual awareness	384
Was the Bible translated into Arabic by the time the Messenger ﷺ came?	385
The testimony of the Qur'anic and the Prophetic career	386
The testimony of historical induction	389
Arabic translations of the Old Testament	391
Arabic translations of the New Testament	394
Evaluation of material	396
The testimony of the Bible's manuscripts	402
Manuscripts of the Old Testament	403
Manuscripts of the New Testament	405
Did Muhammad ﷺ have a human teacher?	410
First possibility: The teachership of the scholars of the People of the Book pre-Prophethood	411
Second possibility: The teachership of the scholars of the People of the Book post-Prophethood	417
In the Makkan period	418
In the Madinan period	421
Third possibility: The teachership of the Makkan pagans	426
Fourth possibility: The teachership of the ironmonger from Rome	430
What about Christianity?	432
1. Nazareth and the Nazarene	433
2. Virgin or young woman?	435
3. Is the son Israel or Jesus?	437
4. 'Here is my servant whom I have chosen'	439
5. Bethlehem is Ephrath	441
6. The king riding on an ass and a foal	444

7. Silver and the potter's field	446
Summary	449
Further reading	450
Section 5: An Applied Study of Inimitability in the Imperceptible: The Story of Joseph ﷺ	451
The Qur'anic story of Joseph ﷺ: Original? Or plagiarised?	453
Many angles for contemplation	456
Revelation? Or quotation?	480
Summary	482
Further reading	484
Section 6: The Inimitability of the Qur'an Vis-à-vis the Ascertaining the Nature of the Divine	485
On divinity, does the Qur'an follow in the footsteps of others? Or does it take control of the discourse?	487
Divinity according to Jews	489
Divinity according to Christians	494
Divinity according to pagans	498
Divinity according to the pre-Islamic monotheists (<i>Aḥnāf</i>)	500
Divinity according to the Greeks	502
Divinity according to the Qur'an	504
Attributes of Allah in the story of exile from Paradise	509
Summary	513
Further reading	514
Section 7: The Inimitability of the Qur'an Vis-à-vis Prophethood	515
Prophethood: Does Islam derive it from its original concept? Or does it borrow its conceptualisation from elsewhere?	517
Prophethood in the Bible	518
Obscurity in the meaning of Prophethood	519
Ignoble acts of the Prophets	521
Disbelief perpetrated by the Prophets	523
Prophethood in the Qur'an	525
The reality of Prophethood	526
Aims of Prophethood	527

1. Awareness and monotheism of the Lord	528
2. Laws of steadfastness and legal ethics	531
3. Glad tidings of Paradise and caution from punishment	532
Aims of mentioning the Prophets' stories	535
Infallibility of the Prophets	538
The Qur'an and the Torah's portrayal of David: a comparative assessment	540
Summary	543
Further reading	544
Section 8: Islamic Law as a Legislative Miracle	545
Flagrant plagiarism? Or serene inimitability?	547
Some legitimate questions on Islamic law	548
Non-Muslim testimony in favour of the Qur'anic legislative system	550
Human sources for the canonical Islamic laws?	553
The Torah and the Talmud	554
The New Testament and canon law	556
The Church has no law	557
The era of canonisation	558
Roman law	559
Islam influenced the laws of Jews and Christians	561
Obnoxious laws? Or a brilliantly systemised body of legislation?	563
War laws compared: Qur'an and Sunnah v. Torah	564
Inheritance laws compared: Qur'an and Sunnah v. Torah	572
Summary	580
Further reading	581
Section 9: Inimitability of Islam's System of Morality	583
The Islamic system of morality: Original? Or a lacklustre adaptation?	585
Arabs and the misfortune of the new approach	586
The core of Jewish morality	590
Is there a moral system in Christianity?	591
Principles of Islamic ethics	594
Summary	598

Further reading	600
Section 10: Inimitability of History in the Qur'an	601
The Qur'an: A miraculous portrayal of history? Or a simple case of borrowing?	603
Prelude to analysis	605
1. The Qur'an containing information never seen before	606
i. Pharaoh's claim to divinity	607
ii. King, not Pharaoh	616
iii. The preservation of Pharaoh's corpse	619
iv. Instruments of torture in Pharaoh's era	624
v. Pharaoh's desire of ascending to the sky	626
vi. Using baked clay bricks for construction	628
vii. Preservation of grain in ear	630
viii. Pagan origins of Christian beliefs	632
ix. The innovation of monasticism	634
2. The Qur'an correcting historical errors of the Bible	635
Numbers of the Children of Israel in Egypt	636
Divinity of Jesus	639
Jesus's message	643
3. The Qur'an avoiding historical errors from the Bible	649
Easterly wind in Egypt	650
Usage of camels in the time of Jacob ﷺ	652
Historical errors in the Bible	657
1. City of Dan	662
2. Kings of Israel	663
3. The Aramean	664
4. Land of the Hebrews	665
5. Ur of the Chaldeans	666
6. Sennacherib takes control over the cities of Judah	667
7. The era of Jehoiakim and Nebuchadnezzar	668
8. The founder of Palmyra	669
9. Belshazzar and Nebuchadnezzar	670
10. Destruction of the Amalekites	671
11. Nonsensical numbers for the dead	672
12. An army's overhyped numbers	673

13. Three	674
14. When Jesus was born	675
15. An imaginary massacre	676
16. A rebellion dated before it occurred	677
17. The darkness that did not appear to anybody	678
18. An unfamiliar Roman custom	679
19. Details of Jesus's trial	680
20. Story of the zombies	681
Summary	683
Further reading	684
Section 11: Scientific Inimitability in the Qur'an	685
The Qur'an: An original document? Or a case of borrowing from the People of the Book?	687
Is there scientific inimitability in the Qur'an?	689
A necessary adjustment to the meaning of the term 'scientific inimitability'	692
1. Correcting scientific errors	694
The origin of the universe	695
Is the origin of the universe from water or fire?	696
The illuminating Moon	698
The end of the Sun	700
The shape of the Sun in the first stages of its death	701
The coming together of the Sun and the Moon	703
Shrinkage of the Sun	704
The Sun falling dark	705
Sphericity of the Earth	706
Pillars of the sky	711
Mountains	712
Clouds as containers and the water therein	718
Dew descending from heaven	720
The creation of languages	721
Lead ant	724
2. Scientific breakthroughs in the Qur'an	725
Suns, not Sun	726
The cortex of light	727

Undersea waves	729
Pearls and corals in fresh (non-saline) waters	732
Near-death experience	734
Scientific inimitability in the Prophetic tradition	736
Scientific errors in the Bible	739
1. The blueness of the sky is because of water	741
2. The sky as a solid construct	742
3. Light and day before the Sun	743
4. Harvest before the creation of the Sun	744
5. The snake eating dust	745
6. The ruminant rabbit	746
7. Eagle wings as carriers	747
8. Ewes in heat	748
9. Snakes kill with their tongue	749
10. The harmful influence of the moon	750
11. The dissolving slug	751
12. The location of Edom/Aram	752
13. A child older than its father	753
14. The number of kitchen inventory pieces: 2499 or 5400?	755
15. Billions of birds	756
16. Stars setting the status of people	757
17. The smallest seed	758
18. Passing through Bethphage	759
19. The mountain that overlooks the entire Earth	760
20. The impossible solar eclipse	761
Summary	764
Further reading	765
SUMMARY IN BRIEF	767
A FINAL WORD	769
BIBLIOGRAPHY	771