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Science and the Divine Nature of the Holy Qur'ān

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Abstract

The Holy Qur'ān, revealed in the 7th century CE to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), contains verses that align strikingly with discoveries in modern science. This paper highlights selected examples where Qur'ānic statements correspond with contemporary scientific understanding, reinforcing the view of its divine origin. Topics such as human embryonic development, lactation physiology, the therapeutic benefits of honey, the expanding universe, and the preservation of Pharaoh's body are explored in relation to scientific literature. The Qur'ānic description of embryogenesis in Surah Al-Mu'minun (23:12–14) reflects remarkable precision, acknowledged by modern embryologists. Similarly, the recommendation of a two-year breastfeeding period aligns with current medical guidelines and evidence showing long-term health benefits for both mother and child. Surah An-Nahl (16:69) describes honey as a healing agent, a claim supported by clinical trials and meta-analyses highlighting its wound-healing and antimicrobial properties. The Qur'ān's reference to the expanding universe (Surah Adh-Dhariyat 51:47) parallels the Big Bang theory. Furthermore, the preservation of Pharaoh's body as mentioned in Surah Yunus (10:92) is consistent with modern forensic findings of Pharaoh Merneptah's well-preserved mummy. These examples suggest that the Qur'ān contains timeless knowledge far beyond the scientific understanding of its era, supporting its divine origin.

Keywords: *Qur'ān and Science, Embryology in Qur'ān, Big Bang Theory, Scientific Miracles of Qur'ān.*

The first revelation of the Holy Qur'ān took place in the city of Makkah in the year 610 CE, when Angel Jibreel brought the first verses of Surah Al-'Alaq to the last messenger of God, Prophet Muhammad PBUH. According to the statistics, the Qur'ān contains 77,430 words, 6,349 ayats (verses), and 114 Surahs (chapters).¹ It is believed that the first written compilation of the Holy Qur'ān was prepared during the caliphate of the first Caliph, Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA), and the first official standardized version was commissioned during the caliphate of Hazrat Uthman ibn Affan (RA). There is scientific evidence that the Topkapi Palace manuscript in Turkey is within a few decades of the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) life.² The surahs or the chapters are divided according to the direct instructions of the last messenger of God with His orders. These surahs are not arranged chronologically. By carefully examining these verses, one may discover a scientific fact that is truly surprising, considering that this divine book was revealed almost 1,415 years ago. Muslims believe that the Prophet Muhammad PBUH was "Ummi," meaning he didn't learn writing or reading from any human being. This belief is based on Surah Al-A'raf (7:158): "So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet (al-nabiyy al-ummī)..." And according to Surah Al-Hijr (15:9), God has explicitly stated that He will protect the Qur'ān from any alteration: "Indeed, We have sent down the Reminder (the Qur'ān), and indeed, We will be its guardian." Therefore it is evident that this book is unchanged for the last fourteen centuries and is not written by a human being and is the direct message of God which is revealed to the last messenger by angel Jibreel.

There is no doubt that faith remains at the heart of Muslim belief. At the same time, there is a lack of high-quality medical research in Pakistan that addresses the correlation between Qur'ānic descriptions and the modern science. One of the main objectives of this short communication is to highlight the scientific evidence related to medicine that supports the hypothesis that the Holy Qur'ān is a divine book.

The Holy Qur'ān's depiction of human embryological development is in remarkable and precise alignment with the present day scientific knowledge. As described in Surah Al-Mu'minun (23:12–14): "*And We certainly created man from an extract of clay. Then We placed him as a sperm-drop in a firm lodging. Then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, and We made the clot into a*

¹ Dukes K, Atwell E, Habash N. Supervised Collaboration for Syntactic Annotation of Qur'ānic Arabic. *Lang Resour Eval*. 2011;45(2):345-355. doi:10.1007/s10579-011-9135-8.

² Altıkulaç T. Al-Mushaf al-Sharif: Attributed to Uthman bin Affan: The Copy in the Topkapi Palace Museum. Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA); 2007.

lump [of flesh], and We made the lump into bones, and We clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators." The extraordinary precision and order of these stages are well acknowledged by scientists and scholars alike. For example, the author of *The Developing Human: Clinically Oriented Embryology*, stated, "It is clear to me that these statements must have come from God, because most of this knowledge was not discovered until many centuries later."³ Similarly, the author of *The Bible, the Qur'ān and Science*, concluded that the chronological sequence of human embryological development in the Qur'ān is "in perfect agreement with modern science."⁴ Further reinforcing this, a study published in the *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences* titled "*Molecular Genetics of Fetal Organogenesis in the Qur'ān*" analyzed the revelations in Qur'ān alongside developmental genetics and concluded that the Qur'ān reflects accurate embryological staging which is consistent with modern embryology.⁵ These scientific insights undoubtedly support the view that this divine narrative goes beyond the scientific knowledge that was available fourteen centuries back. Another such example is the Qur'ān's guidance on breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding provides health benefits for both the infant and the mother and there is good quality scientific evidence to support it. Surah Al-Baqarah (2:233) states: "*Mothers may breastfeed their children two complete years for whoever wishes to complete the nursing [period]...*" Similarly, Surah Luqman (31:14) mentions: "*...his weaning is in two years...*" These verses underscore the significance of a two-year breastfeeding period, aligning with contemporary medical recommendations. These Qur'ānic recommendations are supported by medical literature. For example, the Promotion of Breastfeeding Intervention Trial (PROBIT) which was a cluster-randomized trial with a very good sample size of over 17,000 mother-infant pairs demonstrated that infants who were breastfed had a higher intelligence scores at 6.5 years compared to those who were not which indicates a long-term cognitive benefits.⁶ In addition to this, it is estimated that

³ Moore KL, Persaud TVN. *The Developing Human: Clinically Oriented Embryology with Islamic Additions*. 7th ed. Philadelphia: Saunders; 2003

⁴ Bucaille M. *The Bible, the Qur'ān and Science: The Holy Scriptures Examined in the Light of Modern Knowledge*. Indianapolis: American Trust Publications; 1978.

⁵ Abdullah F, Ali SS, Khan FA. Molecular genetics of fetal organogenesis in the Qur'ān. *Pak J Med Sci*. 2008;24(1):20–25. Available from: <https://pjms.com.pk/issues/janmar08/article/bc3.html>

⁶ Kramer MS, Aboud F, Mironova E, Vanilovich I, Platt RW, Matush L, et al. Breastfeeding and child cognitive development: new evidence from a large randomized trial. *Arch Gen Psychiatry*. 2008;65(5):578–84.doi:10.1001/archpsyc.65.5.578

over 800,000 child deaths and 20,000 maternal deaths can be prevented on an annual basis just by increasing the breastfeeding rates.⁷ A study published in the Journal of the American Heart Association found that women who breastfed had a 9% lower risk of heart disease and stroke.⁸ Moreover, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that breastfeeding reduces the risk of type-2 diabetes, breast and ovarian cancer and hypertension.⁹ Such an accurate alignment of Qur’ānic guidance and the present day scientific research would not have been possible without the divine instructions. In addition to promoting breastfeeding, the Qur’ān provides a description of the biological mechanism behind milk production, a detail now confirmed by modern physiology.

The mechanism of milk production in Surah An-Nahl (16:66) — describing it as emerging from “between digested food and blood” — is in parallel with our modern physiological understanding, where nutrients absorbed from digestion are carried by the bloodstream to the mammary glands for the milk production. According to Guyton and Hall Textbook of Medical Physiology, the mammary glands utilize nutrients such as glucose, amino acids, fatty acids, and water—delivered via the bloodstream—for the production of milk.¹⁰ A 2021 review published in *Frontiers in Nutrition* further elaborates on this process, highlighting the role of transcellular and paracellular transport pathways that facilitate the movement of these nutrients and immunological components, such as immunoglobulins, from maternal plasma into the milk.¹¹ This scientific understanding supports the Qur’ānic description of milk being derived from “between digested food and blood,” as mentioned in Surah An-Nahl (16:66).

The therapeutic benefits of honey mentioned in Qur’ān are supported by the modern science. Surah An-Nahl (16:69) mentions it as a healing substance, stating: “From their bellies emerges a drink of varying colours, in which there is

⁷ **Victora CG, Bahl R, Barros AJD, França GVA, Horton S, Krasevec J, et al.** Breastfeeding in the 21st century: epidemiology, mechanisms, and lifelong effect. *Lancet*. 2016;387(10017):475–90.doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(15)01024-7

⁸ **Tschiderer L, Seekircher L, Kunutsor SK, Peters SAE, Laukkanen JA, Willeit P.** Breastfeeding and cardiovascular disease risk in mothers: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *J Am Heart Assoc*. 2022;11(12):e023639. doi:10.1161/JAHA.121.023639

⁹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Why it matters: breastfeeding. [Internet]. Atlanta: CDC; 2023 [cited 2025 Apr 13]. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/features/breastfeeding-benefits.html>

¹⁰ **Hall JE, Guyton AC.** *Guyton and Hall Textbook of Medical Physiology*. 14th ed. Philadelphia: Elsevier; 2021. p. 1034–1036.

¹¹ **Zhou X, Zhen Y, Wang Y, Fu Y, Du X, Xu D, et al.** Composition and function of maternal breast milk-derived exosomes in infant health: a comprehensive review. *Front Nutr*. 2021;8:703323.doi:10.3389/fnut.2021.703323

healing for people. Indeed, in that is a sign for people who give thought.” A 2024 meta-analysis that included eight randomized controlled trials (RCTs) with 906 patients reported that honey dressings has the potential of significantly speeding up the wound healing by 17 days.¹² Similarly, a systematic review of 30 RCTs concluded that honey promotes rapid epithelialization and wound contraction, lowers inflammation and pain, controls infection, shortens healing time, and is cost-effective.¹³ This growing body of scientific evidence certainly reinforces the Qur'ānic assertion of honey's healing properties; however, further high-quality research is still needed to fully explore and validate its potential therapeutic role in the field of medicine. As a matter of fact, this divine book has also provided in-depth insights about the origin of our universe.

The Qur'ānic description of the expanding universe parallels the Big Bang theory. The Qur'ān makes a remarkable reference to the expansion of the universe in Surah Adh-Dhariyat (51:47), which states, “*And the heaven We constructed with strength, and indeed, We are [its] expander.*” This aligns closely with the Big Bang theory, which proposes that the universe began as a single, dense point and has been expanding ever since. This argument is supported by the scientific evidence that includes the observation of redshift in distant galaxies by Edwin Hubble in 1929, which showed that galaxies are moving away from each other.¹⁴ This discovery confirmed that the universe is not static but continuously growing in size.

Finally, the Holy Qur'ān has made a striking statement about the fate of Pharaoh after his drowning in the Red Sea. In Surah Yunus (10:92), God says: “*So today We will save you in body that you may be to those who succeed you a sign. And indeed, many among mankind are heedless of Our signs.*” Remarkably, in the late 19th century, the mummy of Pharaoh Merneptah which is believed by many scholars to be the Pharaoh of Moses—was discovered in the Valley of the Kings and is now housed in the Cairo Museum. Forensic analyses, including X-ray and

¹² Tang Y, Chen L, Ran X. Efficacy and Safety of Honey Dressings in the Management of Chronic Wounds: An Updated Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Nutrients*. 2024 Jul 28;16(15):2455. doi: 10.3390/nu16152455. PMID: 39125335; PMCID: PMC11314015.

¹³ Yilmaz AC, Aygin D. HONEY DRESSING IN WOUND TREATMENT: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW. *Complement Ther Med*. 2020 Jun;51:102388. doi: 10.1016/j.ctim.2020.102388. Epub 2020 Apr 2. PMID: 32507418.

¹⁴ Hubble E. A RELATION BETWEEN DISTANCE AND RADIAL VELOCITY AMONG EXTRA-GALACTIC NEBULAE. *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A*. 1929 Mar 15;15(3):168-73. doi: 10.1073/pnas.15.3.168. PMID: 16577160; PMCID: PMC522427.

CT imaging studies, revealed that the body showed signs consistent with drowning, yet was unusually well-preserved.¹⁵

Conclusion

To conclude, the Holy Qur'ān, revealed over 1,415 years ago to an unlettered Prophet (PBUH) in the deserts of Arabia, continues to captivate scholars and scientists with its profound alignment to modern scientific discoveries. Numerous verses in this divine book convey knowledge about the natural world that was completely unknown at the time of its revelation. The precise descriptions of human embryological stages, the guidance on breastfeeding and lactation physiology, the therapeutic potential of honey, the reference to the expanding universe, and the preservation of Pharaoh's body all reflect insights far beyond the scientific understanding of the 7th century. These examples raise important questions about the origin of such knowledge in a text revealed to someone who could neither read nor write. Together, they strengthen the perspective that the Qur'ān is not a product of human authorship but is indeed a timeless, divine message that continues to provide guidance and inspire reflection in the modern scientific era.

¹⁵ Hawass Z, Saleem SN. *Scanning the Pharaohs: CT Imaging of the New Kingdom Royal Mummies*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press; 2016.