

SCIENTIFIC PREDICTIONS AND CERTAINTIES IN THE QURAN

- Life is the manifestation of an intangible (*ghayb*) entity called *rooh*.
- This universe is temporary and will end one day.
- A new universe will be created in continuation of the end of the present universe.
- The next universe will be eternal.
- Death is a certainty.
- Every human being will be re-created.
- Next life of human beings in the Hereafter is eternal.
- The quantum of knowledge humanity is entitled to get is finite.

1. Life is the manifestation of an intangible (*ghayb*) entity called *rooh*

There are several verses in the Quran that indicate that *rooh* is what gives life to non-living matter. When God “breathed” *rooh* into a clay model (non-living), it sprung to life creating Adam (Q. 15:28-29); Virgin Mary conceived Prophet Jesus from the *rooh* “breathed” into her (Q. 21:91). Allah has not revealed to us any knowledge about the *rooh* (Q. 17:85). The Quran also uses the word *nafs* in the case of man. Thus when *nafs* (*rooh* of man) is removed from the body, the body loses “life” and becomes dead, i.e., non-living matter (Q. 6:93). This means that *rooh* is intangible (*ghayb*) and is not a material entity. Today biologists believe that a material entity “genome” (molecular gene concept based on DNA) is responsible for the phenomenon of life. This view is totally wrong in the light of the Quranic revelation of intangible *rooh* as responsible for life. The non-physical nature of *rooh* will explain why all our attempts to create life in the laboratory from pure chemicals have failed. While proposing the concept of gene in 1909, Wilhelm Johannsen cautioned against considering the gene for a particular character and also against treating the gene as particulate. Studies conducted in molecular biology not only prove that the molecular gene concept is wrong but also prove that Johannsen is right. Johannsen’s view of “non-particulate gene” comes very close to the Quranic revelation. Accordingly organism can be treated as natural biocomputer (or more precisely biorobots especially animals).

An organism is a natural biocomputer whose development and functioning are determined by divine biosoftware (*rooh*). A cell, the basic unit of a living system, is a biochip. The structures in the cell (organelles and nuclear structures including DNA) constitute the various hardware components. For example, the chromosome serves as the biomemory or the storage device of the biochip. It may be thought of that the biosoftware (*rooh*) is stored on the chromosomes as information and programs are stored on the hard disk of our computer machines. These programs are not “particulate” but requires a physical medium for storage. Although we cannot fathom the mechanism of storage of the divine biosoftware on the chromosome, the storage of information in brain memory certainly adds support that there is non-particulate storage in living cells. Every biological activity from the molecular level (inside the cell) to the level of the organism (individual) is treated in the computer model as programmed function.

The experiments hitherto conducted on the origin of life show that life can arise only from life. Chemists have been able to make complex organic molecules such as proteins, amino acids, DNA, RNA and other complex building blocks of life in the

laboratory but no one has been able to synthesize a cell or put together simple structures such as mitochondria or chloroplasts from its constituents. At present we have the knowledge and technology required to produce any gene in the laboratory. Molecular biologists have been synthesizing genes, and recently a research group at the J. Craig Venter Institute, U.S.A., has artificially produced the complete genome of an organism. The organism is *Mycoplasma genitalium*, a parasitic bacterium with the smallest genome for any free-living cell. The group constructed synthetically the genome of the organism and named it *Mycoplasma genitalium* JCVI-1.0. It contained all genes of the organism except the gene MG408, which was disrupted to block pathogenicity. This is a landmark achievement in biology for two reasons: one is that scientists could synthesize the genome (or genetic program) of a living organism. Secondly, *it proved that a genome cannot produce life*. It is this unwelcome finding that is more important than the former. This would mean that even if a genome (identical to that of a living organism) had been produced through chance combination of molecules in the prebiotic soup, it would not have sprung to life. It should be noted that the researchers at the Craig Venter Institute were primarily aiming at synthesizing an organism in the laboratory (although they had not expressed so) and not merely a genome. They chose the genome of an organism to represent the genetic program of a living organism and hoped that the synthesized genome would spring to life producing the living organism to which it corresponds. The failure of the synthetic genome to spring to life questions the very assumption that life originated from non-life or from a material entity. Instead of starting with producing cell structures, molecular biologists could have started with a dead cell, which represents and provides the chemical and physical milieu to produce life. They only have to bring it to life and save their effort to synthesize a cell from scratch.

The Quran thus predicts that it will be impossible to produce “life” from non-living matter. In other words, the molecular gene concept is wrong. Man will never produce “life” from non-life or be able to restore life to a dead body.

2. This universe is temporary and will end one day

One of the certainties revealed through the Quran is the end of the universe (Q. 7:187). The universe is created to run for a fixed term. The sun, earth, and the whole cosmos would not overshoot that limit (Q. 31:29; 36:38; 46:3). We know stars have limited supply of hydrogen in their cores and therefore they have only limited life. This indicates that the stars cannot go on forever. The finite life of the stars is a clear indication of the finite life of the whole universe.

The fate of the universe is a topic of serious discussion in scientific circles. Theoretical explorations to find answers to this issue are possible with the big bang model which portrays an expanding universe. The Quran repeatedly draws our attention to the end of the universe and also provides certain hints about the end process. The skies will be rolled up like a scroll (Q. 21:104) and the size of the universe will be reduced to a handful (Q. 39: 67).

These statements relating to the end of the universe are fully consistent with the theoretical expectations. The ultimate fate of the universe is supposed to depend on how much dark energy it contains and the value of the density parameter, omega (Ω). Density parameter (Ω) is defined as the average matter density of the universe divided by a

critical value of that density. An Ω greater than 1 represents a “closed universe” In a closed universe gravity eventually brings the expansion of the universe to a stop, after which it starts contracting until all matter in the universe collapses to a point, a final singularity termed the “big crunch”. The inward contraction towards a hot, dense state by the collapsing universe is analogous to a time-reversal of the big bang. The collapse thus leads to the end of the universe. “The rolling up of the heavens as a scroll of paper” may be considered as a metaphor describing the process of collapse of the universe while the reference to the size of the earth as “handful” is consistent with the prediction of small mass of infinite density attainable by a collapsing body. The big crunch theory is thus acceptable as it agrees with the Quranic description of the end of the universe in a broad theoretical sense.

We find cosmologists continue to propose various hypotheses about the fate of the universe, multiverses, cyclic universe, etc. The scientific community has to accept the Quranic revelation on the fate of the universe and stop hypothesising further as any view other than that given by the Quran will be wrong.

3. New universe will be created in continuation of the end of the present universe

As the end of the universe is a certainty, the re-creation of the universe is also a certainty. The Quranic verse cited above (Q. 21:104) also gives certain hints about the mode of re-creation of the universe. Allah tells us that the mode of re-creation of the universe will be similar to the one adopted by Him in its first creation. If we accept the big bang model to describe the cosmogony (the genesis of the universe), according to the Quran it will be by the same process that God will re-create the universe on the Day of Judgement. The end (big crunch) of the present universe being a cosmic singularity, it may serve as the big bang of the next universe. This is also theoretically possible. The universe can undergo a transition from big crunch to a big bang through a string theoretic regime which connects the two phases. This scenario offers a continuum between the present and the next universe and corroborates the Quranic disclosure of re-creation of the universe following the end of the present universe.

4. The next universe will be eternal

The most glaring feature of the re-created universe that distinguishes it from the predecessor is its eternal nature mentioned at many places in conjunction with the description of Heaven (Q. 3:15; 25:16) and Hell (Q. 4:93). The eternal nature is theoretically a characteristic of “flat universe” with Ω equal to 1. A flat universe expands forever but at a decelerating rate asymptotically approaching zero. The universe will not end in a big crunch nor expand into an infinite big chill, but will remain at equilibrium.

5. Death is a certainty

The Quran unambiguously makes it clear that everyone will die (Q. 21:35). This is understandable that this life is a test for human beings and death is required to terminate the test period (Q. 67:2). This Quranic revelation has far-reaching significance. When the Quran categorically declares everyone will die, the scientific community

ignores it and launches a never-ending mission in pursuit of knowledge and molecular technology to conquer death. Concerted effort is now being made in gerontology in this direction. The Quran rules out any success in research in this area.

6. Every human being will be re-created

Resurrection is something which most people find hard to believe. But it is a certainty. Following the creation of the next universe, every human being will be resurrected. It is the true cloning process, i.e., the creation of the facsimile of a person from his biomemome (*nafs*). What modern scientists claim about creation of clones in some organisms (e.g., Dolly, a sheep) based on the particulate genome concept is a big mistake.

7. Next life of human beings in the Hereafter is eternal

The next life (either in Heaven or Hell) is eternal without death (Q. 3:15; 25:16; 4:93). This means that there will be no more deletion of the biosoftware (*nafs* or biomemome) from the body as happened in the test life on this earth.

8. The knowledge humanity is entitled to get is finite

The Quran reveals to us that the source of knowledge is God (Q. 2:255; 34:1; 96:1-8) and the quantum of knowledge man is entitled to get is finite (Q. 17:85). Modern science is an open-ended space with no boundaries to any of its fields. We believe that knowledge comes from 'thin air' during thought process. The Quranic message provides a totally different picture to our understanding of the nature of knowledge. It tells us that knowledge is divine and it comes to us from a divine server (Adam's *nafs*) through germ line as *a priori* knowledge. The finite nature of knowledge implies that some time before the end of the universe, advancement in science and technology (as well as in other knowledge) will come to a standstill. That is when all that is to be revealed to man by God has been revealed.