

THE INDESTRUCTIBLE QUR'ĀN: A TIMELESS RESPONSE TO LIBERAL EXTREMISM

Picture this: a writer hunched over a desk, drafting a document of truths and theories, carefully considering each word, each punctuation. Their work is a vessel of knowledge, yet it is imperfect and shaped by the malleability of human understanding. With each edition, they ask their readers to point out errors, aiming for a semblance of perfection that may never truly be reached.

Contrast this with the Holy Qur'ān. In the opening verses of the 2nd chapter,

ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ

This is the book in which there is no doubt (Qur'ān 2:2). This verse resounds with a declaration that reverberates through the ages till the day of Qiyāmah: this is a book in which there is no doubt. It is a divine testament unblemished by human error, unshaken by the passage of time.

Against the backdrop of recent unsettling events, where the sacred Qur'ān was burnt under the banner of 'free speech,' it becomes critical to remember the unfailing endurance of this divine scripture. In an era, rife with liberal extremism, where desecration of the LGBTQ flag leads to legal penalties, but blatant disrespect of the Book of Allah goes unpunished, the hypocrisy of our collective notion of respect and freedom of speech stands starkly exposed.

The Qur'ān is no ordinary book. The Qur'ān is not merely a religious text. Instead, it is a divine challenge that has withstood the test of time and human ignorance. Initially, Allah challenged humanity to produce something equivalent to the Qur'ān. When none could answer, the challenge was reduced to ten chapters, then one chapter, and finally, to one single verse. Yet, this challenge remains unmet to this day.

Arabs, renowned for their mastery over the Arabic language, could not rise to this challenge. The Qur'ān is unique in its literary form and richness of meaning. The "Qur'ān burner" and his ilk stand testament to this deficiency of understanding, unable to produce even one verse that rivals the divine scripture's wisdom and eloquence. Theirs is a cowardly act and an admission of defeat.

Yet, there is another layer to the Qur'ān's invincibility that the Qur'ān burner has yet to comprehend. Suppose every tangible copy of the Qur'ān were to be destroyed, an endeavor in futility, the sacred words of Allah are not bound by ink and paper; they have taken root in the hearts of millions of Muslims worldwide. The Qur'ān lives and breathes within the chests of its followers, unscathed by the flames of ignorance and hatred.

Let it be known to those who disrespect the Qur'ān: even if you were to desecrate every physical manifestation of the Qur'ān, you could never erase its presence. The Qur'ān remains ever vibrant in the minds, hearts, tongues and lives of Muslims. It is this truth that the 'Qur'ān burner' has yet to grasp. You may strike a match against a page, but you will never extinguish the divine word etched onto the human heart.

This divine resilience serves as a timeless response to such acts of liberal extremism. The Qur'ān, pristine and unassailable, stands victorious against the fires of intolerance. For in every challenge, it poses and, in every heart, it resides, it reiterates the truth of the āyah:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَفِظُونَ

Indeed, it is We who sent down the message [i.e., the Qur'ān], and indeed, We will be its guardian (Qur'ān 15:9)

Allah's protection extends to preserving the integrity of the Qur'ān's language and its profound meanings from any change, subtraction, or addition. It is His eternal promise that whenever someone attempts to distort its sacred message, He will ensure the emergence of those who will restore the clear truth.

Furthermore, Allah's promise encompasses not just the text of the Qur'ān but also its followers. He provides a divine shield, protecting the Qur'ān's adherents from their adversaries, ensuring that no foe can prevail over them.

The fact that Allah protects His sacred text is wonderfully illustrated by a poignant story from the era of the 'Abbāsī Khalīfah, al-Ma'mūn as related by Imām al-Qurṭubī. The court of al-Ma'mūn was a thriving hub of intellectual exchange. The Khalīf would patronize occasional debates on intellectual issues at his court and all scholars were welcome. On one such occasion, a Jewish scholar, refined in manner and eloquent in speech, graced the court. His address during the debate was eloquent and intellectually compelling. When the session was over, al-Ma'mūn called for him and asked him if he was an Israelite, which he confirmed. Al-Ma'mūn then asked him to become a Muslim, but the man declined, choosing to stay faithful to his religion and the religion of his forefathers. He then left.

After a year, the same man returned as a Muslim and made an exceptional contribution in the court meeting on the subject of Islamic jurisprudence. This dramatic shift intrigued al-Ma'mūn, who called the man after the session was over and inquired about the reasons behind his conversion.



The man, a scribe by profession, narrated an experiment he had conducted. To test the authenticity of contemporary religious texts, he had transcribed three significant scriptures – the Torah, the Injil, and the Qur'ān. In each, he had made intelligent omissions and additions of his own, to challenge the accuracy of their preservation. He then took these manuscripts to the synagogue, church, and masjid to sell them. The Jewish community accepted his distorted copies of the Torah without discerning the discrepancies. The Christians, similarly, bought the erroneous copies of the Injil, finding them fascinating. However, it proved much more difficult to sell the Qur'ān because every attempt to sell the altered Qur'ān was met with refusal. Each of the potential buyers would take the manuscript, examine it to determine if it was correct or not, and upon noticing additions or deletions he would quietly return the manuscript back to the scribe, remaining faithful to the divine authenticity of the Qur'ān.

This experience was transformative for the scribe. He came to understand the unparalleled preservation of the Qur'ān, an undeniable manifestation of divine intervention. This convinced the man of the Qur'ān's divine origins, and he accepted Islam.

Through this story, we appreciate an integral aspect of the Qur'ān's invulnerability. Despite any attempts to distort its divine message or burn its physical copies, the Qur'ān lives on, safeguarded in the hearts of millions of Muslims. Its enduring purity and authenticity, irrespective of external threats or internal negligence, serve as a testament to its divine origin and protection.

Let this story be a reminder to those who disrespect the Qur'ān under the banner of free speech. The Qur'ān is not just a book; it is a divine scripture whose protection is ensured by Allah Himself. No amount of flames can erase its wisdom from the hearts of believers, nor can they distort its message. The Qur'ān stands unscathed, its divine integrity untarnished.

وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَرَهَقَ الْبَطْلُ إِنَّ الْبَطْلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا

And say, "Truth has come, and falsehood has departed. Indeed is falsehood, [by nature], ever bound to depart." (17:81)

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