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Research Paper Outline

Science and the Quran

I. Introduction:

- A. Thesis: There are those that believe that for the Quran to be true, it must be in agreement with science, while, on the other hand, some discard science if it contradicts the statements of the Quran. The reality is that, while they can be intertwined, they are not interdependent on each other, which can be understood by considering how Muslims should treat the Quran's verses, how science is a flexible and ever-changing method, and how there are different approaches to science and the Quran.
- B. Background: Traditional approach to relating science and verses from the Quran, advanced further by Maurice Bucaille's book. Scientists began finding fault in and picking apart the traditional approach's arguments. Hamza Tzortzis suggests a 'new' approach that follows the example of classical Islamic scholars. It suggests that the Quran is always true while the beauty of science is that it is always changing.

II. What is the Quran?

- A. Discusses the story of how Islam and the Quran were brought down to Muhammed PBUH. The main purpose of the Quran is to direct people to the right path via signs (book of signs, not a book of science)
- B. History of how the Quran was preserved throughout the centuries, undergoing no dramatic changes in meaning, only in the addition of diacritics.

III. What is science?

- A. Defines science as a methodology used to focus on and to comprehend the natural world by using testable ideas, evidence, and research while involving the scientific community, leading to further research, and benefiting from scientific behavior.
- B. Three fundamental features of science:
 - 1. Systematic empiricism: Conclusions based on observations.
 - 2. Empirical questions: Reasonable questions based on observations from the natural world.
 - 3. Public knowledge: Publishing work or presenting it, spreading the new information to the general public.
- C. Science can only deal with things that come from the natural world, not metaphysical things or unobservable phenomena.

IV. Examples of the Quran and science in agreement:

- A. Astronomy:
 - 1. Difference between the light from the Sun and Moon.
 - 2. Celestial orbits

3. Expansion of the Universe.

B. Geology:

1. Underground roots of the mountains described in the Quran

C. Biology:

1. How milk is extracted from cows (Surat Al-Noor)

2. Embryology and the formation of the fetus (described by multiple verses)

V. Problems with the traditional approach:

A. They claim that the ‘miracle’ in the Quran is that it could not have been possible for a man in the desert to know about the information presented in it.

1. The Arabs, in fact, were connected to all the other Kingdoms and Empires that were nearby, including the Byzantine and Chinese Empire. Any information from those lands could have come to the Arabs.

2. Many of the verses alluding to scientific information have been discovered by previous civilizations.

a) The Egyptians knew about the fact that iron was not a mineral native to Earth.

b) The Bible, too, discusses the roots of the mountains that are deep below the ground.

VI. Islamic approach to science:

A. Islam does not deny science, and sincere Islamic faith should not use science to base what should or should not be followed by the Quran.

- B. Recognize that science is a methodology that is constantly changing. Islam teaches that the Quran is the truth, and one with sincere faith should accept that.
- C. Both are interrelated but not interdependent; Islam recommends that its followers actively seek greater understanding of their religion and the world around them, but the Quran's validity does not depend on what science says, nor should science be shunned because it conflicts with Islamic teachings.

VII. References page:

- A. 2 Books minimum.
- B. Rest are online sources.