QUR’ĀN’S PROPHESY FOR ‘MOVING OBJECT’ OF FUTURE

Abstract:

Qur‘ān, the word of Allah (Lord-The Almighty), anticipated some 1400 years ago that a moving object will walk and communicate to humans on its own, called as ‘Dāb-bah min al-‘Arḍ’. It further discloses that this will be a moving creature originating from earth and it will appear close to the occurrence of the Day of Judgment. We hypothesized that this unique prophesy of the Quran; ‘Daab-bah min al-‘Arḍ’, in the light of current technology advancements has started to emerge. We analyzed that the invention of rotatory wheel which created the motion by non-living objects, dates back to 3500 B.C., being one of the first rotatory motions achieved. Presently this invention has been transformed computationally to robots, preprogrammed to move and talk. The evidences have been reported in scientific and scholarly literature which is pointing towards support of the Qur’ānic foretold in future, not far. We conclude that this Qur’ānic foretold is may be about the future robot to come, that will be independent to walk and communicate as per its own drive and this shall indicate the culminating point of the world.

KEY WORDS.


THE INTRODUCTION

Qur‘ān is the message of Almighty Lord, revealed to Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), the Prophet of Islam. It gives guidance to humanity. It also unveils existing facts as well as provides information on events of the past and about those to appear in future. It is locked and saved in heavens for protection from changes and available to us in the form as it was revealed. The Lord has thus claimed in His book - The Qur‘ān, as follows:

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"We have sent down to you this book which makes plain everything and is guidance, blessing and good news to those who have surrendered themselves entirely."(1)

In this short paper we describe one of the forewarnings of the Qur’ān. It is a unique indication about a ‘moving creature’ of future on this planet; which will not be human but will move and speak to humans. It is an interesting piece of information, as we integrate references together for analysis, which showed that the glorious Qur’ān has indicated about this amazing creature fourteen hundred years ago. This strengthens believe that truly Qur’ān is a word of The Lord and a complete book for the guidance of mankind.

ACCOUNT OF MOVING OBJECTS
It is reported in literature that one of the early invention by human beings was the wheel. Man created the wheel and used it in carts to be pulled by animals. Wheeled cart appeared around 3500 B.C. in Mesopotamia (2) and hence the rotary motion became possible. As the mankind progressed, lot of moving equipment and machines were invented; such as bucket over a wheel for fetching water from well and a spindle to make thread. Wheels geared and prime moved, making movement easier and efficient. Gradually it resulted in much bigger, improved and efficient movers like heavy motors and cars. Movement of objects, other than living organisms, has currently been transformed from a rotating wheel to unmanned vehicles and robots. The robots being defined as automatons programmed to perform manipulated tasks, often in response to environmental cues (3).

Latest discoveries have produced computer programmed moving objects/robots based on Artificial Intelligence. The Next stage from here appears to be completely amazing based upon rapid progress in the field of Artificial Intelligence towards Artificial General Intelligence (AGI). It is speculated that there will be humanized robotic androids that we commonly see in science fiction (4).

THE BELIEF
It is a belief of majority of world religions that the universe, including the earth, will come to an end one day. It is believed by Muslim religion that the
Lord has created this enormous universe to see the conduct of humans. The Lord will roll back everything and will then resurrect the human beings to hand over the reward, good or bad, as per their deeds in this world. As he has said in the glorious Qur’ān:

"(He) Who created death and life that He may try you to see which of you is best in deeds, and He is the All-Mighty as well as All-Forgiving"(5)

Further, the destruction of the universe for subsequent resurrection of humans has been defined in a splendid way in Qur’ān in following words:

1) When the Sky is cleft asunder;
2) When the Stars are scattered;
3) When the Oceans are suffered to burst forth;
4) And when the Graves are turned upside down;
5) (Then) shall each soul know what it hath sent forward and (what it hath) kept back.
6) O man! What has seduced thee from thy Lord Most Beneficent?
7) Him who created thee, fashioned thee in due proportion, and gave thee a just bias,
8) In whatever form he wills. Does he put thee together?
9) Nay! But ye do reject Right and Judgment!"(6)

Qur’ān brings in attention the concept of the Day of Judgment, when the people will be gathered for the reward. It is defined in many verses of the Qur’ān, as in Chapter 1: Fātiha (The opening Chapter), verse 4.

Further it tells that no one except the Lord knows when this destruction of universe and the Day of Judgment will take place; as described in this verse:

"Men ask thee (you) concerning the Hour: say, ‘The knowledge thereof is with Allah (The Lord) alone’. And what will make thee (you) understand? _ Perchance the Hour is nigh! (Near)" (7)
SIGNS OF THE GREAT HAPPENING
This is a fact that nobody knows when the Day of Judgment will occur. However, there will be some signs emerging before its occurrence. One of the sign of nearby occurrence is given in the Qur’ān in following words:

"And when the Word is fulfilled against them (the unjust), we shall produce from the earth a Beast to (face) them: he will speak to them, for that mankind did not believe with assurance in Our Signs". (8)

While explaining the meaning of the phrase 'when the word is fulfilled against them' Abdullah Yusuf Ali, a renowned British-Indian scholar, writes in his translation and explanation of the Holy Qur’ān:

“The Word: The Decree or Sentence, the Decision to end the respite and restore the true values of right and wrong in a new world: their cup of inequity will then have been full”. (9)

This clearly means that when the flexibility of time given to unjust will be over, then further unfairness will not be tolerated.

S. Abul A‘lā Mawdūdī renowned scholar and commentator of the Qur’ān translated the same verse of the Qur’ān as follows:

"And when the time of the fulfillment of Our Decree approaches them, We shall bring forth a beast for them from the earth, which will speak to them (about this) that the people did not believe in Our Revelations.” (10)

Further in explanation of this verse, S. Abul A‘lā Mawdūdī wrote, “This, however, is not clear whether it will be just one beast, or a particular species of beasts, who will spread all over the earth………… might contain both the meanings.”

S. Abul A‘lā Mawdūdī also quoted related saying of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) as follows:
“The sun will rise in the west and the beast will suddenly appear in the open daylight. Whichever of these signs appears first, it will be closely followed by the other.” (Narrated by ‘Sahîh Muslim’)

He then wrote that in other traditions related in ‘Sahîh Muslim’, ‘Sanan Ibn-e-Mâjah’, ‘Jâme’ Tirmidhi’, ‘Musnad Ahmad’, Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) foretold that the signs of Resurrection – emergence of the Anti-Christ (Dajjal), appearance of the beast (Dâb-bah), smoke and the rising of the sun in the west – will appear one after the other.

S. Abul A’lâ Mawdûdî further wrote, “As for the nature, general appearance, place of appearance and other details about the beast (Dâb-bah), contradictory traditions have been reported, which only cause confusion and are not relevant to the object for which this thing has been mentioned in the Qur’ân.”

Further ‘Imâm Râzi, a Muslim theologian and philosopher from Khurâsân said regarding contradictory/unauthentic narrations about the beast (Dâb-bah) that in the Holy Qur’ân there is no evidence about them, So whatever is supported by authentic (Sahîh) Hadîths only will be considered. (11)

MEANING OF ‘DĂB-BAH’ IN ARABIC
In Arabic text of the Qur’ânic verse (Verse 82 of Chapter 27: Namal, The Ants) under discussion the word ‘Dâb-bah’ is used. This word has been translated by many, including Abdullah Yûsuf ‘Alî, as ‘Beast’ or ‘Animal’. However, when we consult ‘An Advanced Learner’s Arabic-English dictionary’ by Anthony Salmone (12), the word ‘Dâb-ba’ means ‘crept’, ‘crawled along’; ‘went on all fours’. Though the word ‘Dâb-bah’ is not given in this dictionary, however, the word ‘dâb-ba’ is a root word and the word ‘Dâb-bah’ is a derived noun from it. Examples of derivation from root words are:

‘Sadda’ means ‘to close’; has a derived noun ‘Sadda’, meaning ‘The one who closes’.
‘Kaffa’ means ‘to stop’; has a derived noun ‘Kaffah’, meaning ‘The one who stops’. (13)

In order to strengthen the argument that ‘Dāb-bah’ in the verse quoted above means ‘The one who moves’ or ‘a moving creature’, we will refer to the translation of few of the verses of the Holy Qur‘ān in different chapters where word ‘Dāb-bah’ is translated as ‘moving creature’, though ‘Dāb-bah’ in each of the following verse is used in a different context than the particular ‘Dāb-bah’, emerging before the Day of Judgment’. (14)

“And so many a moving (living) creatures carries not on its own provision. Allah provides for it and for you.” (29:60)

“And He (Allah) has scattered there in moving (living) creatures of all kinds.” (31:10)

“And in your creation, and what He scattered (through the earth) of moving (living) creatures are signs for people who have Faith with certainty.” (45:4)

“And no moving (living) creature is there on earth but its provision is due from Allah.” (11:6)

“There is not a moving (living) creature but He has the grasp of its forelock.” (11:56)

It is evident from above verses that the word ‘Dāb-bah’ in Holy Qur‘ān wherever comes, means ‘A moving creature’. It can be noticed that the word ‘living’ in the English translation given above is in parenthesis, introduced by the translator, which indicates that meaning of ‘Dāb-bah’ is ‘moving creature’, and it can or cannot be a living entity. Further to support this argument, we consulted The New Hamlyn Encyclopedic World Dictionary, for the word ‘creature’, which has following meanings:

Anything created, animate or inanimate (according to the same dictionary ‘inanimate’ means ‘lifeless’ or ‘spiritless’)
An animate being

An animal, as distinct from man

It may therefore be safely considered that the word ‘Dāb-bah’ used in Chapter 27, Namal (The Ants): verse 82 means ‘A moving creature’ or ‘The one who moves’, which may not be necessarily a beast or an animal – That is, it may be a lifeless or a spiritless creature.

**ORIGIN OF DĀB-BAH**

While discussing origin of this moving creature in the light of the same verse (Qur’ān 27:82), it is revealed that The Lord Almighty will bring this moving creature ‘from the earth’. The actual text of this verse of Qur’ān says 'Dāb-bah min al-Arḍ', which means a 'moving creature from the earth'. It may be interpreted as ‘produced from the earth’ or ‘comes from the earth’.

Moving forward from here, as we know that, every automatic machine/equipment has its base in electronics. Basic building block in electronics is an IC (Integrated Circuit) or 'a chip', having 'silicon' as its source. Silicon accounts for 25.7% of the earth crust \(^{(15)}\). So we can safely infer that the 'moving creature coming from the earth’ will have earth or silicon as its origin.

Considering characteristics of ‘Dāb-bah min al-Arḍ’, it is pertinent to mention here that present day latest machines like unmanned vehicles and robots, yet not fully qualify the definition of the 'Dāb-bah min al-Arḍ'; because 'Dāb-bah min al-Arḍ', as defined in this verse of Glorious Qur’ān, will speak to the mankind to make them recognize Allah’s (The Lord’s) Revelations, which they never believed.

Keeping the 'Dāb-bah's specific attribute of talking to mankind, as given in the Qur’ān, it appears to be a sort of moving creature or entity having capability to talk to the people intelligently on its own. As we see today’s robots can move and talk as computationally programmed rather on their own. Science is now progressing further when these robots may communicate to humans on their own and not what has been programmed in
them. We are rapidly going towards a time when we will see this sort of talking features in robots. As per Science and Technology Illustrated – The world around us by Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. “Extraordinary advances in producing micro circuits......... are rapidly making computers much more sophisticated. This trend may very likely produce a new generation of robot that will be a creature much more in man’s image” (16).

The field of Artificial Intelligence is rapidly progressing towards Artificial General Intelligence (AGI). AGI is a programme that can solve a variety of complex problems in various different domains, and is able to control itself autonomously, with its own thoughts, worries, feelings, strengths, weaknesses and predispositions (17). It can be hypothesized that robots characterized with AGI may be the ones described as 'Dāb-bah min al-Arḍ' i.e. ‘moving creature from the earth’. At present a fully functioning AGI is yet to be developed. However, the research on developing and improving computer intelligence is rapidly performed and this contributes to AGI realization (18-20). That may be a time when the Day of Judgment will approach soon after that; as appearance of ‘Dāb-bah min al-Arḍ’ is one of the signs of near occurrence of the Day of Judgment. That time when the Day of Judgment will occur seems like not far from today based upon the progress of fast moving technology. The nearness of this time has been indicated to us in the Glorious Qur‘ān in following verse:

"To God belongeth the mystery of the heavens and the earth, and the Decision of the Hour (of Judgment) is as the twinkling of an eye, or even quicker: for God hath power over all things.” (21)

CONCLUSION

The believe that is searched in this paper clearly agreed upon by the evidences of current advancement of technology that “The Qur‘ān is the word of Lord”; and ‘Dāb-bah min al-Arḍ’, a disclosure in Qur‘ān, which will be a ‘moving creature coming from the earth’ will speak to the people on its own and will be an indication appearing near before the Day of Judgment. History of motion by non-living beings has transformed greatly from the well-known invention of the wheel to present day progress with regard to
robots. The basis of these electronically driven robots is an IC, produced from silicon, which comes from earth. The time is now moving towards the era when robots will talk to people completely on their own that ‘time’ doesn’t seem far, as modern day electronics and Artificial General Intelligence is swiftly moving towards that fact.
References

7. Abid, 33:63
8. Abid, 27:82
9. Abid, 33:12
14. Khān, M Muhsin, Dr. & al-Hilālī, M Taqi-ud-Dīn, Dr. Translation of Qur‘ān.