**The Islamic Doctrine of Scripture**

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1. Mohammed’s Claim
   1. He was illiterate (considered an evidence for the divinity of the Koran), 29:48, 10:38f.
   2. Through numerous trance experiences, the angel Gabriel dictated to Mohammed every syllable of the book.
2. Structure of the Koran (contrast with Scripture)
   1. 114 Suras, arranged from long to short (except for the first).
   2. 6247 verses (Ayat)
   3. Narrative, chronology de-emphasized, but some stories similar to the Bible.
      1. Familiar characters: Adam, Abraham, Jesus, Mary.
      2. Creation.
   4. Jump from one theme to another in each Sura.
   5. Main theme is law rather than redemption or forgiveness.
   6. Originally committed to memory of M., disciples.
   7. Mohammed is said to have directed where each part should go.
   8. Eventually they wrote it on “bones, leaves, and stones, bark, boards….”
   9. Abu Bakr, first caliph made first complete copy. Present form from Uthman, third caliph, 646 (Official version). Final version imposed by authorities. Older versions condemned, burned.
   10. Evidence of compilation, editing.
3. Theological Claims About the Koran
   1. “The only miracle”
   2. Co-eternal with God. Uncreated.
      1. Parallel with Christian claims about Christ.
      2. Reverence due. Ritual cleanliness, symbolic position.
      3. Superstitions: first Sura good for scorpion bites.
   3. Revealed rather than inspired.
   4. Arguments: perfect Arabic style, preservation, prophecies, unity, scientific accuracy, mathematical structure, changed lives, rapid spread of Islam.
   5. Sufficiency: reason is imperfect, so we can know good and evil only by the Koran.
4. The “Previous Scriptures”
   1. Given by Allah to prophets of the past.
   2. Mohammed appealed to them.
   3. He evidently believed in the authenticity of the Scriptures available in his day, 5:68, 21:7.
   4. Muslims urged to heed them, 2:136, 3:84, 4:163, 10:94, 18:27.
   5. But later claimed corrupt, 5:13-15
      1. Word can’t be changed. 6:115, 10:64f
      2. But changes in Koran admitted 16:101, 2:100, 17:86.
      3. But when was B corrupted? Who changed it, etc.
   6. Doctrine of abrogation
      1. “None of our revelations do we abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but we substitute something better or similar” (2:106, cf. 16:101, 13:39).
      2. Later texts abrogate earlier texts.