

Spellbound by Revelation: The Qur'an and the 'Sorcery' Accusation

Context, motives, and the inimitability that outlived the accusation

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Lecture One: An Analysis of the Accusation of “Sorcery” Against the Qur’an—A Testimony to Its Preternatural, Norm-Transcending Effect.

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In the Name of God, the All-Merciful, the Compassionate.
May God bless Muhammad and his pure Household, and may He curse all their enemies.
Peace be upon you, O Baqiyyat Allāh—aid me!

The Potency of the Word: An Analysis of Why the Quran Was Called ‘Magic’

Introduction: Framing the Central Inquiry

The historical accusation that the Quran was “magic” (sihr), leveled by its earliest and most powerful opponents, is far more than a simple pejorative label. This accusation, far from being a mere historical footnote, is the starting point of our inquiry—a hostile confession to a power so disruptive it demanded a supernatural explanation. This report will deconstruct this charge to reveal what it implies about the Quran’s capacity to reshape human consciousness, alter social structures, and inspire a state of profound inner certainty. This analysis will proceed by first establishing the historical precedent for this accusation through the story of the Prophet Moses, thereby defining a core principle. We will then apply this principle to the Quran, examining a key historical case study involving one of its most qualified critics. From there, we will explore the Quran’s own description of its internal psychological impact, before concluding with the spiritual conditions necessary to experience its power today. To grasp this, we must first establish the principle behind using “magic” as a label for divine signs, a precedent set long before the Quran’s revelation.

1. The Principle of the ‘Magic’ Accusation: The Precedent of Moses

To understand the weight of the “magic” accusation, it is essential to appreciate its specific historical context. The term was not a casual insult but a strategic response to witnessing a real, observable, and extraordinary event that defied any known natural cause. It was a label applied when detractors were confronted with an undeniable effect but refused to concede its divine origin. The case of the Prophet Moses provides the foundational example. When Moses confronted Pharaoh, he presented tangible signs: his staff transformed into a serpent, and his hand glowed with a brilliant white light. It was these observable, miraculous acts—not his speech or theological arguments—that prompted the immediate accusation of magic. The onlookers saw a phenomenon that violated the laws of nature as they knew them. This illustrates a critical principle: The accusation of “magic” is an unwilling acknowledgment of a powerful, observable effect, used by those who refuse to accept its divine origin. Pharaoh’s own court magicians, who were masters of illusion, understood this. Their sorcery was described in the Quran as a powerful act of deception that could manipulate perception: “...they bewitched the eyes of the people and struck terror into them, and they produced a mighty magic.” (Surah Al-A’raf, 7:116) Yet, when

they witnessed the reality of Moses's sign, they recognized it as something far beyond their craft and submitted. The accusation, therefore, is the resort of the denier who has witnessed an undeniable power. The question that follows is how this same logic, born from observing a physical miracle, could be applied to a recited text—the Quran.

2. A Tangible Impact: Applying the Principle to the Quran

If the accusation of “magic” implies an observable and extraordinary effect, then the Quran must have generated a phenomenon of similar magnitude in its own right. The early opponents of Islam labeled the Quran “magic” precisely because they witnessed its profound and inexplicable impact on individuals and society. They saw a force at work that they could not otherwise account for. This effect was fundamentally different from the influence of even the most brilliant Arab poetry. While master poets could evoke powerful emotions, their craft operated within a known framework of rhetoric and literary skill (asalib). The Quran's effect, however, was perceived as operating outside this framework, causing not just admiration but radical, life-altering conversions. It did not just entertain the mind; it re-engineered the soul. The central thesis, therefore, is that the accusation was a direct reaction to the Quran's demonstrated ability to “turn hearts” and spiritually “revive the dead.” Its detractors observed people from their own community—family, friends, and tribe members—undergoing radical personal transformations after hearing its verses. This spiritual and social upheaval could not be explained by the known arts of rhetoric or poetry, forcing them to reach for the only label they had for an inexplicable, supernatural force: magic. The most compelling evidence for this phenomenon comes from the detailed testimony of one of its most formidable critics.

3. Case Study: The Verdict of Al-Walid ibn al-Mughira

Al-Walid ibn al-Mughira was a chief of the Quraysh tribe, a man of immense wealth, political influence, and renowned wisdom. He bore the epithet Wahid Makkah (“the Unique of Mecca”) for his singular status, and historical accounts describe his riches as so abundant that one qintar of his gold was said to fill a bull's hide. Critically, he was also considered one of the foremost experts in Arabic literature and poetry, making him a uniquely qualified, albeit hostile, witness to the Quran's power. His judgment was sought by the other chiefs to formulate a unified campaign against Prophet Muhammad (s). As the historical accounts relate, Al-Walid went to listen to the Prophet (s) recite the Quran. He heard the opening verses of Surah Fussilat, and his reaction was immediate and visceral: he was seen to tremble, with every hair on his body standing on end, deeply shaken by what he had heard. This involuntary physical response was evidence that the Quran's recitation was not merely being processed intellectually but was directly engaging his innermost self—his nafs—a mechanism we will explore in detail. Later, in a consultation with the chiefs of Quraysh, they deliberated on how to discredit the Prophet (s). They considered several labels: Liar: Al-Walid refuted this, noting that Muhammad (s) was famously known among them as “the trustworthy” and had never been known to lie. Madman: He dismissed this as well, arguing that the Prophet's (s) composure and coherence were obvious to anyone who

spoke with him. Soothsayer: This too was rejected, as the Quran's form and content bore no resemblance to the rhyming prose of soothsayers. Having exhausted all rational explanations for the Prophet's (s) influence, Al-Walid concluded that the Quran must be labeled "magic" because its primary observable effect was its ability to separate loved ones: a son would abandon his father's faith, a brother would turn from his brother, and a husband from his wife, all after hearing its message. The Quran captures his internal struggle and final declaration: "Indeed, he thought and deliberated. So, may he be destroyed for how he deliberated! Then may he be destroyed for how he deliberated! ... Then he said, 'This is not but magic from of old. This is not but the word of a human.'" (Surah Al-Muddathir, 74:18-25) This historical verdict, from an expert adversary, serves as powerful external evidence of the Quran's transformative effect. This power was so evident that it was acknowledged not only by its enemies but also by its proponents, who adopted a strategy built on confidence in its persuasive force.

4. Acknowledged Power: The Quran's Proponents and Opponents

The Quran's extraordinary power was a recognized reality for both its followers and its staunchest enemies. This shared understanding is revealed in the starkly contrasting strategies each side employed. The very tactics they used demonstrate a mutual acknowledgment of the text's irresistible persuasive force. First, the Quran itself expresses supreme confidence in its message by directing believers to invite polytheists to simply listen. It commands that even an enemy seeking proximity should be granted safe passage specifically for this purpose: "...then grant him protection so he may hear the word of Allah..." (Surah At-Tawbah, 9:6). This directive is not a call for debate or coercion but an invitation to experience the text directly, confident that the act of hearing alone is sufficient to demonstrate its truth. Second, in direct opposition, the strategy of the disbelievers was not to engage in intellectual refutation but to prevent people from hearing the Quran at all. They actively warned against listening and conspired to create distractions during its recitation: "And those who disbelieve say, 'Do not listen to this Quran and speak noisily during it that you may overcome.'" (Surah Fussilat, 41:26). This strategy is a direct corollary to the 'magic' accusation; unable to refute the observable effect of the Quran on listeners, they resorted to preventing the phenomenon from occurring in the first place. The opponents' attempt to suppress the Quran's recitation is a tacit admission of its power. They did not fight the message with a counter-argument; they fought the very act of hearing it. This reveals their fear that once the Quran reached a person's heart, they would be unable to counter its profound effect. This raises a crucial question: what is the mechanism by which the Quran achieves this deep internal transformation?

5. The Inner Dimension: How the Quran Transforms the Soul (Nafs)

The unique power of the Quran lies in its direct address to the innermost consciousness of the human being—the self, or nafs. It does not merely speak to the intellect but engages the entire spectrum of human psychology. The text acts as a mirror to the soul, revealing thoughts, hidden motivations, and inner conflicts that a person may not even be

consciously aware of themselves. This intimate knowledge is possible because, as the Quran states, God is closer to a person than their “jugular vein” and knows the “whispers of the self.” The Quran provides a sophisticated framework for understanding and purifying the soul by identifying its primary states. Engaging with this framework allows the listener to diagnose their inner condition and see the path to spiritual growth. The Soul That Commands Evil (Al-Nafs al-Ammara bi-l-Su’) This is described as the base state of the self, the raw, unrefined ego that is inclined towards wrongdoing and selfish desires. The Quran acknowledges this reality without condemnation, stating, “Indeed, the soul is a persistent commander of evil, except for when my Lord has mercy” (Surah Yusuf, 12:53). By identifying this inclination, the Quran provides both a diagnosis and the cure: recognizing this internal pull and actively seeking God’s mercy to overcome it. The Self-Reproaching Soul (Al-Nafs al-Lawwama) This is the voice of the conscience, the internal mechanism of self-criticism that surfaces after a transgression. It is the feeling of guilt or regret that signals an awareness of a higher moral standard. The Quran honors this state, swearing an oath by it: “And I swear by the self-reproaching soul” (Surah Al-Qiyamah, 75:2). This is the beginning of spiritual awakening, where the soul begins to police itself and strives for improvement. The Tranquil Soul (Al-Nafs al-Mutma’inna) This is presented as the ultimate goal of spiritual development. It is a state of profound peace, unshakable certainty, and complete contentment with God. The Quran not only describes this state but actively calls the listener towards it, creating a powerful spiritual aspiration. It paints a picture of a soul at rest, secure in its faith, and invited to return to its Lord, well-pleased and well-pleasing. By laying out this spiritual map, the Quran empowers the individual to embark on a journey of self-purification. To begin this journey and experience its transformative effect, however, requires more than a simple reading; it demands a specific set of inner conditions.

6. The Path to Experiencing the Quran: Conditions of the Heart

Experiencing the transformative effect of the Quran is not an automatic process. It requires a specific inner disposition and a conscious approach to the text. This spiritual etiquette, or adab, is outlined in a key prophetic tradition from Misbah al-Shari’a, attributed to Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq, that details the necessary conditions for the heart to become a receptive vessel for the divine word. من قرا القرآن ولم يخض الله ولم يرق قلبه ولم ينشئ حزنا ووجلا في سره فقد استهون Translation: “Whoever reads the Quran and does not feel humility before God, and whose heart does not soften, and who does not bring forth sadness (huzn) and awe (wajal) in his innermost self, has taken the greatness of God’s affair lightly and has suffered a manifest loss. Therefore, the reader of the Quran is in need of three things: a humble heart, an unoccupied body, and a solitary place.” This tradition distills the prerequisites for a fruitful reading into three essential conditions: A Humble Heart (Qalb Khashi’): A heart that is open, reverent, and submissive before the majesty of God, consciously aware that it is receiving a divine address. An Unoccupied Body (Badan Fariq): A state of being free from worldly distractions and preoccupations, ensuring the mind and body are present and focused. A Solitary Place (Mawdi’ Khali): A physical environment that allows for deep concentration and fosters a sense of intimacy with the divine, free from external interference. These conditions are not

arbitrary rules but functional prerequisites. The tradition continues by explaining their purpose: they are designed to clear the heart of Satanic interference and worldly noise. By humbling the heart, the “accursed Satan flees,” and by freeing the self from worldly causes, the heart is cleared for the recitation. In this state, the reader can experience the “sweetness of God’s discourse” and witness its power firsthand.

7. The Embodiment of Tranquility: Imam Hussein (a) at Karbala

The analysis culminates in the crucible of Karbala, where the Quran’s theoretical promise of tranquility is made manifest amidst unimaginable carnage. The abstract concept of the “Tranquil Soul” (al-Nafs al-Mutma’inna) finds its most tangible and awe-inspiring manifestation in a living reality. The ultimate practical example of this embodiment is Imam Hussein (a) on the day of Ashura. Imam Hussein (a) is surrounded by thousands of enemies, has just witnessed the brutal slaughter of his sons, brothers, and loyal companions, and is himself wounded and alone. Yet, his state is portrayed as the living fulfillment of the Quranic address, “O tranquil soul, return to your Lord...”. His example transforms this spiritual ideal from a distant goal into a concrete, attainable reality, serving as the “speaking Quran.” The contrast between his external state and internal reality is profound. While his body was subjected to the ultimate worldly violence, his soul was experiencing the ultimate divine intimacy. Eyewitness accounts from the opposing army described his state with astonishment: “I have never seen one upon whom calamity has multiplied... more composed...” This living demonstration of the Quran’s power to forge an unbreakable soul, a tranquility that no worldly disaster can shake, is presented as the pinnacle of its transformative potential. It is this potent combination of a profound text and a living example that is the source of the Quran’s enduring power—a power so great that its first detractors could only describe it as magic.

8. Conclusion: Reclaiming a Lost Intimacy

The accusation of “magic” leveled against the Quran by its first opponents was, in reality, a backhanded compliment. It was a forced admission, from its fiercest critics, of the text’s undeniable and inexplicable power to radically reshape human consciousness and upend established social orders. They witnessed its ability to turn hearts and revive souls, and “magic” was the only term they had to describe it. Today, many readers feel distant from this transformative effect. This distance, however, is not a deficiency in the Quran but a challenge for the modern reader. The Quran’s potency has not diminished; rather, our capacity to receive it may have. The path to rediscovering this power is not a historical exercise but a present-day spiritual imperative—a journey of the heart toward an intimacy (uns) that can, once again, reshape a soul. This intimacy is pursued through proper recitation, sincere engagement under the right spiritual conditions, and seeking assistance through intercession (tawassul) with the “partner of the Quran,” the Imam of the Age (aj). By undertaking this journey, it is possible for every individual to rediscover the Quran’s life-altering effect, tasting for themselves the power that once led its opponents to call it magic.

Summary of Key Points

The accusation of “magic” against a divine sign is a historical admission of its powerful, observable, and inexplicable effect. The Quran’s impact was considered fundamentally different from even the most eloquent poetry, causing profound personal and social transformation that could not be explained by natural means. The expert testimony of Al-Walid ibn al-Mughira confirms that the Quran’s effect—specifically its ability to reorder social and familial loyalties—was so potent that “magic” was the only available explanation for those who rejected its divine source. The Quran achieves this transformation by directly addressing the human soul (nafs), providing a framework for its purification through its three states: the commanding, the self-reproaching, and the tranquil. Experiencing this transformative power requires a specific spiritual disposition of humility and focus, which is ultimately embodied in the living example of Imam Hussein’s (a) “tranquil soul” at Karbala.

Lecture Two: The Dynamic Efficacy of the Noble Qur’an and the True Nature of Its Inimitability

Introduction: Redefining the Quranic Miracle

This report presents a detailed analysis of the central argument that the inimitability of the Qur’an—its fundamental miracle, or I’jaz—is not primarily found in its linguistic eloquence or literary form. Rather, its true, unassailable power lies in its profound and transformative impact on the human heart, soul, and conscience. The Qur’an’s efficacy is demonstrated by its ability to revive “dead hearts” and address the deepest aspects of the human condition, engaging directly with the individual’s innermost being. The core thesis explored herein posits that the early adversaries of Islam, while viscerally experiencing this spiritual power, were unable to challenge it on its own terms. Consequently, they orchestrated a systematic and deliberate shift in public focus. This strategic diversion moved the conversation away from the Qur’an’s spiritual “kernel”—its capacity for guidance, healing, and transformation—towards its literary “husk,” its external qualities of rhetoric and eloquence. This analysis, therefore, challenges traditional exegetical approaches that have historically privileged the literary dimension of I’jaz, arguing instead for a phenomenological understanding of the Qur’an’s inimitability centered on its verifiable transformative effects. We will begin by examining the Qur’an’s initial and direct challenge to its 7th-century Arabian audience.

The Unassailable Challenge and its Psychological Impact on Early Adversaries

The Qur’an’s strategic importance was immediately established through its open challenge (tahaddi) to all of humanity to produce a single chapter comparable to it. This was not merely a literary contest but a direct confrontation with the prevailing polytheistic worldview, designed to compel a society of master poets and orators to engage with its divine truths. The challenge was absolute: “And if you are in doubt about what We have

sent down upon Our Servant, then produce a surah the like thereof.”¹ This public declaration forced its opponents to contend with the text’s unprecedented nature. The reaction of the Qurayshi elite provides a powerful testament to the Qur’an’s psychological impact. A prominent example is that of Al-Walid ibn al-Mughira, a leading figure in Mecca known for his wisdom and eloquence. After listening to the Prophet’s recitation, he was so profoundly affected that he acknowledged its unique power, stating that it was unlike any poetry, prose, or soothsaying he had ever heard. Lacking any natural or rational explanation for the text’s overwhelming effect on him, he resorted to the only available supernatural category: he labeled it “sorcery” (sihr). This accusation, far from being a simple dismissal, was an implicit admission of its extraordinary, otherworldly power—an effect that could not be explained by human craft. This irresistible spiritual and aesthetic pull is further demonstrated in a historical account detailing the actions of three of Islam’s staunchest enemies: Abu Jahl, Abu Sufyan, and Akhnas ibn Sharīq.² On three consecutive nights, each man was independently and secretly compelled to position himself outside the holy Prophet’s (s) home to listen to his recitation of the Qur’an. Though they would meet by chance upon leaving and rebuke one another for this weakness, they could not resist returning. This event serves as definitive proof that even those publicly committed to destroying the message were privately captivated by its beauty and power. When confronted about this behavior, Abu Jahl revealed that his opposition was not a matter of truth or falsehood, but of tribal rivalry with the Prophet’s clan, stating, “We and the sons of Hashim have been rivals in honor... Now they say, ‘A prophet has come to us from among us.’ We can never accept that.” Their rejection was thus rooted in a socio-political power struggle, not a theological one, and it was precisely this undeniable spiritual power that led to a deliberate plot to misdirect public attention away from its source.

The Systematic Diversion: A “Crime Against the Qur’an”

The inability of the Qur’an’s opponents to refute its core message or diminish its spiritual impact led to a conscious and systematic strategy to neutralize its influence. This was achieved by diverting public focus from its transformative essence—its role as a source of guidance, insight, and healing—to its external literary form. This calculated misdirection is framed as a “crime against the Qur’an” because it intentionally obscures the very purpose for which the book was revealed. The underlying motive for this diversion was to sever the essential link between the divine text and its divinely appointed interpreters: the holy Prophet (a) and his purified household, the Ahl al-Bayt (a). The Qur’an’s deeper meanings and transformative potential, it is argued, are only fully unlocked through their guidance. By reducing the Qur’an’s miracle to a matter of linguistics, opponents could argue that its authority could be judged by secular literary figures of the past, such as the pre-Islamic poet Imru’ al-Qais, thereby making the divine guidance of the Prophet’s household (a) appear redundant. This policy served to distance the populace from the true wellspring of Quranic knowledge and power. To clarify this distinction, the speaker offers a powerful

¹ Qur’an, Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:23.

² As narrated by Ibn Hisham in Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah, cited by the source.

analogy. Imagine a patient who receives a prescription from a brilliant doctor who also happens to be a master calligrapher. The prescription is written with exquisite beauty, but its true value lies in the medicine it prescribes. If the patient becomes so entranced by the beautiful handwriting that he focuses only on the “calligraphy” (the linguistic form) while ignoring the “medicine” (the spiritual guidance and transformative content), the cure will be rendered entirely ineffective. This is precisely the effect of focusing on the Qur’an’s “husk” while ignoring its “kernel.” This misdirection led people to admire the vessel while neglecting the life-saving substance within.

A Spectrum of Influence: The Qur’an’s Differentiated Impact on Humanity

The universal and multifaceted influence of the Qur’an is best demonstrated by examining its distinct effects on different audiences. The text does not produce a monolithic reaction; rather, it interacts with the spiritual and psychological state of the listener, generating a spectrum of responses from awe and submission to fear and rejection.

On the Believers (Al-Mu’minun), the Qur’an initiates a profound spiritual process. The initial encounter with the divine word induces a state of awe and trembling (qash’arirah), a physical and emotional recognition of its divine majesty. This initial agitation is then followed by a state of tranquility and softness, where their skins and their hearts relax and soften towards the remembrance of God. This process culminates in a tangible increase in their faith (iman). The Qur’an itself describes this dynamic: Allah has sent down the best of statements: a Scripture consistent and paired, from which the skins of those who fear their Lord tremble. Then their skins and their hearts relax at the remembrance of Allah.³ This spiritual nourishment is a continuous process, as another verse states: The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, their hearts become fearful, and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith.⁴

On the People of the Book (Ahl al-Kitab)

The Qur’an’s power to resonate with prior truths is vividly illustrated in the historical account of the Muslim migration to Abyssinia. Fleeing persecution in Mecca, the Muslims sought refuge in a Christian kingdom. The Quraysh, however, dispatched a delegation led by Amr ibn al-’As to demand their extradition, branding them as criminals who had abandoned their ancestral religion. In this high-stakes judicial setting, the king, the Negus (Najashi), summoned the Muslims for their defense. Their leader, Sayyidna Ja’far ibn Abi Talib (a), recited the opening verses of Surah Maryam, which honor Virgin Mary (a) and the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ (a). The effect was immediate and profound, as the Qur’an itself describes: And when they hear what has been revealed to the Messenger, you see

³ Qur’an, Surah Az-Zumar, 39:23.

⁴ Qur’an, Surah Al-Anfal, 8:2.

their eyes overflowing with tears because of what they have recognized of the truth.⁵ The Negus and his bishops wept, acknowledging the divine source of the recitation and its affirmation of their own core truths. Ja'far's (a) recitation served as a successful legal and political defense, and the Negus's tears were a verdict as well as an emotional response, demonstrating the Qur'an's power to confirm the essential truths of previous revelations.

On the Disbelievers (Al-Mushrikun)

The reaction of the polytheistic disbelievers (al-Mushrikun) was paradoxical. On the one hand, they recognized its power so acutely that they actively tried to suppress it. They understood that merely hearing the Qur'an could sway hearts, so they resorted to creating chaos and noise during its recitation to prevent others from listening, as the Qur'an itself documents: And those who disbelieve say, "Do not listen to this Qur'an and speak noisily during it that perhaps you will overcome."⁶ On the other hand, their arguments against it contained an implicit acknowledgment of its greatness. They did not claim it was a poorly constructed text; on the contrary, they argued that a book of such magnificence should have been revealed to a man of great worldly stature from Mecca or Ta'if, not an orphan of modest means. Their objection, "Why was this Qur'an not sent down to a great man from the two cities?"⁷ confirms their awe at the book's profound content, even as their materialist criteria led them to reject its messenger.

On the Hypocrites (Al-Munafiqun)

For the hypocrites (al-Munafiqun), who feigned belief while harboring dissent, the Qur'an induced a state of persistent fear and anxiety. They lived in constant dread that a new revelation would descend and expose their secret plots, resentments, and the malevolence within their hearts. Every new surah was a potential threat, leading them to exchange nervous glances, wondering if their conspiracy had been discovered. Surah At-Tawbah, for example, became known as Al-Fadiha ("The Exposer") for its role in unmasking their duplicity. This demonstrates the Qur'an's function as a divine criterion that penetrates facades and reveals the true state of the human heart.

⁵ Qur'an, Surah Al-Ma'idah, 5:83.

⁶ Qur'an, Surah Fussilat, 41:26.

⁷ Qur'an, Surah Az-Zukhruf, 43:31.

The Cosmic Resonance: The Qur'an's Power Beyond the Human Realm

The Qur'an's sphere of influence extends beyond mankind to encompass other forms of creation, including spiritual beings and the very fabric of the physical universe. This cosmic dimension underscores its status as a living, dynamic force whose power is not limited to human psychology.

Influence on the Jinn

The Qur'an explicitly documents its effect on the Jinn, spiritual beings who, according to Islamic tradition, have witnessed the eras of previous prophets and revelations. In Surah Al-Jinn, a group of Jinn overhears the holy Prophet's (s) recitation and is immediately struck by its unique nature. Despite their vast lifespans and accumulated experience, they recognize it as something entirely new and wondrous, declaring: "Indeed, we have heard a wondrous Qur'an (qur'anan 'ajaba). It guides to the right path, so we have believed in it."⁸ Their immediate submission and recognition of its role as a guide to righteousness highlight that its miraculous nature transcends species and is apparent to all intelligent beings who encounter it sincerely.

Influence on the Natural World

The Qur'an further describes its own potential power in terms that verge on the cosmic, suggesting it contains a force capable of acting upon the physical world itself. These verses are presented not as metaphors, but as descriptions of the inherent power contained within the divine word.

On Mountains: The text possesses a spiritual weight so immense that, were it to be revealed to a mountain, the mountain would humble itself and crumble out of reverence and fear of Allah.

⁸ Qur'an, Surah Al-Jinn, 72:1-2.

On the Earth and the Dead: The Qur'an is identified as the ultimate instrument of miraculous power, capable of moving mountains, cleaving the earth to facilitate near-instantaneous travel across vast distances (tavy al-ard), or even making the dead speak. A single verse encapsulates these cosmic potentialities: "And if there was any qur'an by which the mountains would be moved or the earth would be cloven asunder or the dead would be made to speak..."⁹ The verse employs a powerful rhetorical structure wherein the conclusion is deliberately omitted to emphasize its self-evident truth and unparalleled power: if any book could achieve such feats, it would be this Qur'an.

The Living Embodiment: Ahl al-Bayt (a) as the "Speaking Qur'an"

The culmination of this analysis rests on the critical Islamic concept of the *Thaqalayn* (the Two Weighty Things), a prophetic tradition establishing the inseparable link between the Qur'an and the Prophet's purified household, the Ahl al-Bayt. The tradition states: "I am leaving among you two weighty things: the Book of Allah and my kindred, my household." This establishes a foundational principle: the Qur'an as the "Silent Qur'an" and the Ahl al-Bayt as the "Speaking Qur'an." It is argued that the Qur'an's transformative power is only fully and safely realized when its interpretation is sourced through the Ahl al-Bayt (a). When detached from its living, divinely appointed interpreters, the physical text can be manipulated and weaponized. The Battle of Siffin provides the ultimate historical example: the army of Mu'awiyah, on the verge of defeat, raised copies of the Qur'an on their spears to call for arbitration. Here, the physical book was used to mislead the masses and rebel against its ultimate living interpreter, Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (a), the very man designated as the gate to the city of prophetic knowledge. The members of the Ahl al-Bayt (a) themselves embodied the same transformative spiritual power as the Qur'an. This is illustrated in the account of the prominent atheist Ibn Abi al-Awja's encounter with Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (a). A renowned debater, Ibn Abi al-Awja approached the Imam with arrogance, but upon returning to his peers, he was visibly shaken, stating: "This is not a human being. If there were in this world a spiritual being that can embody itself when it wishes and become a spirit when it wishes, it is he." He confessed that he had never felt such an overwhelming sense of awe in the presence of any other scholar.

⁹ Qur'an, Surah Ar-Ra'd, 13:31.

About Imam Ḥussein (a): On the Day of ‘Āshūrā’, his words—even within the enemy ranks—turned hearts and awakened consciences, laying bare the heinousness of the crime.

The presence of Lady Fāṭima al-Zahrā’ (a): Her sermon in the mosque moved the people to break into tears and sobs; an affective response that exactly matches the Qur’an’s description of the believers when they hear God’s Speech and its verses: “They fall upon their chins, prostrating, and weeping” (Q 17:109), and “When the verses of the All-Merciful are recited to them, they fall down prostrate and in tears” (Q 19:58).

In a striking parallel, just as the Qur’an’s effect was dismissed as “sorcery,” the profound divine authority emanating from the Ahl al-Bayt (a) was similarly labeled by their opponents as “the sorcery of Banu Hashim.” Those who could not comprehend its divine source resorted to the same accusation, inadvertently testifying to its supernatural power.

Summary of Key Conclusions

The central arguments of this report can be distilled into four key conclusions: **The Core Miracle:** The Qur’an’s true inimitability (I’jāz) lies not merely in its literary form but in its profound spiritual and psychological efficacy—its unparalleled power to transform human hearts, minds, and consciences. **The Historical Diversion:** A deliberate strategy was employed by the Qur’an’s adversaries to obscure this core power. By shifting the focus of inquiry to its external literary features, they attempted to neutralize its message and sever it from its true interpreters. **Universal Influence:** The Qur’an’s efficacy is demonstrably universal, exerting a distinct and powerful influence on all who encounter it—including believers, members of other faith communities, avowed adversaries, hypocrites, and even non-human and cosmic realms. **The Inseparable Link:** The Prophet’s household, the Ahl al-Bayt (a), are the “Speaking Qur’an.” They are the indispensable living sources and authoritative interpreters through whom the text’s full transformative potential is realized and protected from corruption and misinterpretation.