

A refutation of the claim initiated by Rashad Khalifa, that the Quran contains a miraculous pattern of 19; on Bahai\_Discuss, 23 May 2006. This posting combines two previous postings on the same topic, and has itself been edited here

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Postings about the Quran, traditions and other sources of Islamic teachings

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Subject: Rashad Khalifah's 19  
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You fail to show that Baha'u'llah anywhere said that the miraculous nature of the Qur'an consisted in the pattern of 19. The idea was actually put forward by a 20th century American Muslim. Baha'u'llah lived in the 19th century in Persia and the Ottoman empire, he was an entirely different person. He could hardly have "adopted" the idea, because he lived before this stuff was made up. The pattern of 19's in the Baha'i calendar comes from the Bab, not Baha'u'llah, and he lived even earlier. The Qur'ans used by the Bab and Baha'u'llah were not exactly the same as those today, so some of the 19's you found, they could not have found, even if they were looking for them.

> One of the Great Miracles"

> 1. The first verse (1:1), known as "Basmalah," consists of 19  
> letters.

Yes, counting

b s m hamza+alif L L h alif L r H m n alif L r H y m  
you do get 19.

If I wanted to prove that the Qur'an was based on patterns of 21, I would count the doubled letters twice.

b s m hamza+alif L L L h alif L r r H m n alif L r r H y m

If I wanted to prove that the Qur'an was based on patterns of 12, I would count each letter that appears only once

b s m hamza+alif L h alif r H n alif y

> 2. The Quran consists of 114 suras, which is .....19 x 6.

Except that not all versions of the Qur'an do consist of 114 surahs. In the version of Ubayy. b. Ka'b (who was Muhammad's secretary), Surah 104, the Scandal-monger

(humaza) continued straight on into surah 105, the Elephant. But he didn't have 113 surahs, because he had 2 other surahs that are not in the present Qur'an, so I suppose he had 115 in all. But that is not certain, because many of the early Qur'ans did not have the fatiha (surah 1) and/ or the last two surahs, or they had them but did not count them as Surahs. so: 1) The present structure of the Egyptian 1923 standard edition of the Qur'an, which is now used almost everywhere, is the outcome of history, chance and the work of men, and cannot be counted as a miracle, and 2) anyway, what is miraculous about  $19 \times 6 = 114$ ? Most numbers have factors.  $19 \times 5 = 95$ .  $20 \times 6 = 120$ .

> 3. The total number of verses in the Quran is 6346, or .... $19 \times 334$ .  
> > [6234 numbered verses & 112 un-numbered verses (Basmalahs)]  
>  $6234 + 112 = > 6346$

These verse numbers are a recent addition: medieval Qur'an commentators never refer to them because they hadn't been thought of then. Even today, German Islamologists use a different numbering system to French Islamologists. Pakistani muslims have different numbers to Egyptian muslims. etc. You can confirm this by looking at the 1934 intro to Yusuf Ali's translation of the Qur'an, which is widely distributed, on page iv he says "The different qiraats (versions) sometimes differ as to the punctuation stops and the numbering of the verses. ... It is important that at least in Islamic countries one system of numbering \*should be adopted.\* " So in 1934, people in the Islamic world were well aware of the inconsistencies. By 2004 those people are largely dead, and the 1923 Egyptian edition has been so massively successful that people all over the world are beginning to think that that is the way the Qur'an has always been. Quranic experts of course know better, but if they say anything in public in Muslim countries they are likely to be called heretics, and then to be assassinated by ignorant dogs who claim to speak for Islam and the Quran, or they have their marriages annulled and have to flee to the west for safety.

Moreover you will notice that, to achieve a multiple of 19, the unnumbered verses have to be counted . If 6234 had itself been a multiple of 19, they would not have been added. That already gives a 2 out of 19 probability of being able to find a multiple - simply by choosing which counting method is used. But there are more than 2 possible counting methods: you could for instance decide not to count the initial detached letters, and see if that worked out. The general mathematical principle is that probabilities are only significant if the event (in this case, the count of verses) is not itself selected or manipulated.

> 4. The Basmalah occurs 114 times, despite its conspicuous

- > absence from
- > Sura 9 (it occurs twice in Sura 27) & 114= 19x6.

Except that the early versions of ar-Rabi' b. Khuthaim , Ibn Mas'uud, Talha and perhaps some others I can't name at the moment do have a Bismallah at Surah 9. Moreover, all you have shown here is that if we take a number, add one and subtract one, we get the same number. This is a miracle ??

- > 5. From the missing Basmalah of Sura 9 to the extra Basmalah
- > of Sura 27, there are precisely .....19 suras.

If you count both 9 and 27, there are 19, if you count the surahs between 9 and 27 there are 17, if you subtract 9 from 27 there are 18. For any random phenomena, if you have 3 different counting methods, there are 3 chances out of 19 that you can show the phenomena is a multiple of 19.

Imagine you have a text, say Winnie the Pooh, and a set of 20 different things you can count in all or part of the text (number of words, number of letters, number of sections between things, sum of things, ...) and another 3 rules you can apply to massage the count (leave out chapter names, include chapter names, count paragraph breaks (tabs) as a letter symbol...), and that you want to prove that Winnie the Pooh has a miraculous pattern of sevens. You go to work and produce a set of 10,000 numbered phenomena, being all the phenomena you can count in the whole book, and for 3/7ths of them you will have been able to find a pattern of 7's. Now just forget the ones that don't show this pattern, and present a list of the 428 different counts that do show the pattern of 7. Amazing. A miracle! Four Hundred And Twenty Eight proofs that there is a pattern of sevens in Winnie the Pooh. How clever he is !

Rather, how gullible and ignorant the people have become, to be deceived by such tripe. To disprove it, simply go to one short surah of the Qur'an yourself and look for phenomena that fit the pattern of 19. Is the number of verses a multiple of 19? How many verses have 19x number of letters? Between the first verse with 19 letters and the last verse with 19 letters, how many verses are there? And so on. Record each one that does \*not\* produce a 19. If you keep going, you will eventually find something that does have a factor of 19. But I will lay odds on that you will find roughly 18 things to count that don't fit, for every 1 that does produce a 19. If you allow yourself some choice in rules, like counting the Bismallah or not, or counting the detached letters as one word together or as separate words, you will be able to raise your success rate.

The miracle of the Qur'an is not in its form, but in its spirit. If you want to discover the miracle, close your eyes to the world, and

your ears to the yapping of its dogs, and open them to the spirit, and understand what the Word is saying to you.

Then read the Gospels and the Hidden Words with the same eyes and ears. truly, "... the favor is complete, the argument fulfilled, the proof manifest and the evidence established. Let it now be seen what your endeavors in the path of detachment will reveal."