

## Fast 2

“And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call on your helpers besides Allah if you are truthful.” — Ch. 2, v. 23.

“Or say they: He has forged it? Say: Then bring a chapter like it, and call upon whom you can besides Allah, if you are truthful.” — Ch. 10, v. 38.

“Or, say they: He has forged it. Say: Then bring ten forged chapters like it, and call upon whom you can besides Allah, if you are truthful.” — Ch. 11, v. 13.

“Say: If people and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Quran, they could not bring the like of it, though they helped one another.” — Ch. 17, v. 88.

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### Notes:

Traditionally it is considered that the challenge of the Quran that no one can produce a book like it, or like a part of it, relates only to the eloquence of its language, and that the Quran issued this challenge to the Arab opponents of Islam and deniers of the Holy Prophet who prided themselves on their mastery of Arabic composition.

It has been pointed out, in particular by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and his followers, that this challenge is *not merely* that the beauty of the language of the Quran cannot be matched by any human composition but that there are other unrivalled qualities of the Quran as well. Two important ones are: (1) the universal truths and principles that it teaches, which no human being could arrive at by knowledge and study, and (2) the purifying effect it had on its hearers and the great transformation of character it brought about in them.

It is generally said that the challenge to produce a book like the **whole** of the Quran (17:88) came first, when only a little of the Quran had been revealed and it was a smaller book. As more of the Quran was revealed and it grew in length, it challenged them to produce a book like just **ten of its chapters** (11:13). And lastly, when most of the Quran had been revealed and it was even larger, it challenged people to produce something to match just **one chapter** (2:23). So the length required in the challenge remained about the same.

It may also be that, even at the end, all the three challenges still remained in force, not just the last one. Some qualities of the Quran may be seen by looking at one or a few chapters, for example, its eloquent and captivating language. Other qualities can only be appreciated by looking at the whole of the Quran, for example its comprehensive nature, or its consistency throughout with no contradictions. The challenge of the Quran is, therefore, that no human book can compete with the Quran, whether written as a short book to compete with some part of the Quran or as a long book to compete with the whole of the Quran.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote as follows:

“Know that the clear miracle of the Holy Quran which can be displayed to a person of any nation, speaking any language, and by which we can silence a man of any country, whether he is an Indian, Persian, European, American, or of any other country, is that the knowledge and the truths contained in the Quran are unlimited, and are disclosed in every age according to the needs of that age. They stand like armed soldiers to combat the philosophies of every age. If the Holy Quran had been a limited thing in terms of the truths contained in it, it could not possibly be a perfect miracle. Eloquence of language by itself is not a quality whose miraculous nature can be appreciated by everyone, whether learned or uneducated. ...

Whatever doubts arise in any new age, with the new conditions in it, and whatever excellent knowledge any new age may claim to have discovered, the Holy Quran contains a complete refutation and criticism of it and can compete with it fully. No person of any religion or follower of any philosophy can show a spiritual truth which is not contained in the Quran. The wonders of the Holy Quran can never come to an end, just as the wonders of nature did not come to an end in some previous age, but ever newer ones are constantly appearing. The same is true of this holy scripture.”

(Book *Izala Auham*, pp. 305-311)

Another aspect of the Quran, therefore, in which no other book could ever compete with it, is that its wonders do not come to an end, and its knowledge is never exhausted but yields ever newer treasures with the passage of time.