

## A CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF BENNETT'S THOUGHTS REGARDING THE MIRACLES OF HOLY PROPHET ﷺ

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### **Abstract:**

Miracles are the integral part of the religions. All the primitive followers of religions firmly believe and accept the happening of miracles but with the passage of time the intellectual enhancement and beginning of the era of renaissance in-sighted the people to criticize the religion in the light of prevailing scientific principles. Upholders of the laws of nature in the west left no stone unturned to defy the very happening of the miracles. It has been learned that the followers of a particular religion have accepted the miracles in their own religion while they have rejected the same kind of miracles of other religions. Thus in this context the double standard has been commonly observed.

Clinton Bennett is one of the contemporary scholars who have earnestly applied his closed attention to the biography of the holy Prophet ﷺ resultantly; an addition of a modern and useful book has emerged to the literary scene of the orientalism. Therefore, he had to concentrate upon the relating miracles as he quoted various oriental scholars along with his own scholastic evaluation and explanation of the prose and cones of the discussed miracles in the light of history and chronography.

In the study under-hand we will try to examine and test his submissions regarding the particular field of miracles and biography. A critical examination of his contribution would be made with special relationship to the added aspects of the subject by him. This study focuses on Clinton Bennett's work on *Sirah* specifically with his broader view of the subject and to examine all of the methodological ways and means used by him.

**Key words:** Clinton Bennett, Prophet's biography, Miracles, Genuine Prophet ﷺ .

### **1. Introduction**

Miracles have remained irrefutable facts in the history of religions throughout the past. Not only the Islam but also the Christianity and Judaism are deep rooted on the frame work of miracles. Therefore, the believers from the very beginning recognized and accept the miracles in their religious and divine background. After the renaissance in the west, the people started thinking against the Ecclesiastical beliefs and the blind following of the ancient accepted laws of the religions resultantly; logical and natural physical laws have dominated and accepted by the modern scientists and as well as the reformers. The western thinkers crossed all limits in this context that they have rejected and disbelieved altogether the metaphysical and divine beliefs. It was generally believed that the universe is surviving according to the natural physical laws and nothing could happen against these solid facts and the repudiator of these laws was considered to

be the ignorant. As it was not easy to repudiate the miracles, therefore, the revisionists started justifying and explaining the miracles under the accepted laws of nature. Therefore, they refused the possible happening of miracles because they think that these miracles contravene the accepted laws of nature and had no explanation in the contemporary physical sciences. However, Miracles must have some scientific explanation within the framework of physical sciences.

In the result of intellectualism in the west, the Muslim scholars also started thinking on the same lines, both 'Traditionalists' and 'Modernists'. The traditional thinkers partially accepted the scientific explanation but did not compromise on the divine reality of miracles. In this group Mawlana Abdul Haq Haqqani (1917), Mawlana Sana ullah Amretsari (1948), Mawlana Abu'l a'la Mawdudi (1979), Sayyid Qutb (1966) and Peer Karam Shah Al-Azhari (1999) are well known. On the contrary, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1898) and Ghulam Ahmad Pervaiz (1985) started scientificating Qur'anic laws and miracles of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to cope with the western thinkers.

Thereafter, western scholars and especially the orientalists had started quoting the eastern (Modernist) scholars for the refusal of miracles and thus a cycle of miracles refute survived. Both (Modern Muslims and western) scholars had a common reason of rejecting the miracles that of contradicting the accepted physical laws of nature.

Apparently miracles do not tally with logic and reason but this rejection and reservation is deeply associated and based upon the inherent hatred of the orientalists to the very person of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Because if the same thing not related to Him ﷺ, is time and again acceptable and suitable to the orientalists. Dr. Ahmad Shafa'at has also pointed out the same in his article that the criteria applied by the Christian writers for their own traditions are different then they often applied to the Muslim traditions. For example William Muir rejected the miracles of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ declaring them as fabrication but accepted the miracle stories mentioned in Bible without any quest. Muir (1905) wrote his book in 1894, but double standards of critical scrutiny continued for a long time.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the orientalists followed the methodology of Sir William Muir (1819-1905) in order to understand Islam and the Prophet of Islam. On the other hand, Charles Forster (1787-1871) who was Muir's contemporary, wrote a book '*Mahometanism Unveiled*' in 1829 which was an effort to change the enmity of orientalists towards the Holy Prophet ﷺ into a friendly attitude, as he says that:

As I have shown, many such writers addressed Muhammad (ﷺ) in order to score points in quit different debates. They probably did not think that Muslims would read their writing, or even that they were guilty of calumny.<sup>2</sup>

Impact of Foster's writings on other orientalists was limited as compare to Muir but William E. Phipps (2010)<sup>3</sup> was the man who brought the behavioral change and used some measure of consistent methodology for comparative study of Noble Prophet ﷺ and holy Jesus Peace be upon Him in his book *Muhammad and Jesus: A Comparison of the Prophets and Their*

<sup>1</sup> William Muir, *Life of Mahomet* (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 65, Cornhill, 1861), 117.

<sup>2</sup> Clinton Bennett, *In Search of Muhammad* (London: Cassell Wellington House 125 Strand, 1998), 103.

<sup>3</sup> He was Professor at Davis and Elkins College, Elkins, West Virginia.

Teachings. Now Clinton Bennett's two books *In Search of Muhammad* and *In Search of Jesus* are an addition to this category as pointed out by Dr. Ahmad Shaf'at<sup>4</sup>

**Clinton Bennett**<sup>5</sup> is one of the contemporary orientalist who have written a number of books and research articles on different topics of Islam. He has contributed not only in the Islamic literature but also the biographic field. He has tried to reconstruct the biography of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ afresh. It is observed that contemporary orientalist have focused on Him ﷺ that much, which they never done to Jesus Peace be upon Him, as Clinton Bennett has realized himself that:

Whilst Muslims quickly point out that Muhammad (ﷺ) was only a man, that his biological makeup was the same as that of any reader of this book, they also point out that Muhammad (ﷺ) was spiritually unique. It is interesting, in passing, to note that we know much less about Jesus (Peace be upon Him) than we do about Muhammad (ﷺ).<sup>6</sup>

While writing on *Sirah* in his book '*In search of Muhammad*', he has benefited from the works of nineteenth and twentieth century's Christian scholars. Yet he has also made use of apostate's writings in order to understand Islam. After consolidating the variety of scholar's views on the biography of the holy Prophet ﷺ, he has contributed himself to the subject that include the birth date of holy Prophet ﷺ, child hood, youth, and proclamation of the Prophet Hood, migration to Medina, the wars and finally the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Out of the biographic work of Bennett we are herein, trying to through light and concentrate on the miracles portion. We intend to evaluate and examine his work regarding miracles and other biographic points raised by him.

## 2. Clinton Bennett's Efforts to Exclude Miracles from Islamic Literature

As far as the miracles perspective is concerned, Clinton Bennett's search is seriously hampered by theology. He makes allowance and exemption to the Christianity while the same are not thought to be suit Islam. As Dr. Ahmad Shafat said:

As in case of Muhammad, so also in case of Jesus Bennett's search is seriously hampered by theology. His Christian view of Jesus seems to come before he has actually done the search. In case of the Prophet (ﷺ) Muhammad, he consciously chose to combine his search with a need to fit Islam into his Christian outlook. "Because I am a Christian (and

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Ahmad Shafaat, A review of: Clinton Bennett, *In Search of Muhammad* and *In Search of Jesus* (<http://islamicperspectives.com>, May 2002), 1.

<sup>5</sup> Clinton Bennett (born in 1955 in England) a well known orientalist is a specialist in Christian-Muslim Relations, an author, ordained Baptist Minister and a University teacher. Currently he is in the process of revising some of his articles and book chapters for a new book reflecting on forty years of involvement in Christian-Muslim relations.

<sup>6</sup>Bennett, *In search of Muhammad*, 2.

theologically trained), I have also tried to understand how Islam can fit into my Christian world-view.<sup>7</sup>

He has been generally seen to argue against the very happening of the most of miracles and trying to exclude them from *hadith* and biography of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, using the chronological order and the historical events. He over criticizes the happening of miracles by discrediting the narration itself and using the historic disagreements of the time of happening miracles so on and so forth. When he succeeds in the exclusion of miracles from *hadith* and *sirah* then, Qur'anic declarations and disclosures relating to the miracles would mean nothing. Thus the Qur'an (God Forbid) in this way is discredited.

Bennett, in order to promote his internal intentions and to offer a sugar coated tablet to the Muslim community, has suggested:

In my view, if we extract miracles from Muhammad's (ﷺ) biography, including the Night Journey and Ascension, or interpret them metaphorically, and resist attributing to his lips *hadith* which seem to contradict his message (including those who extol or condemn people and places", we are left with a very credible account of a charismatic personality who, as a religious and social reformer, overcame great odds to achieve success and power without ever losing his personal humility and humaneness.<sup>8</sup>

Bennett has suggested a solution to the contradiction between Hadith and Qur'an by taking the miracles metaphorically then the person of Muhammad become highly charismatic and acceptable. The above mentioned polarity lodged by Bennett is intentional and purposely webbed to create confusion in the whole literature of Islam and most interestingly he is himself confused to how to mix up the basics of Islam. For he suddenly suggests that genuineness of Prophet-hood demands the performance of miracles which according to him Islam lacks; Because Qur'an did not mention any other miracle except the text of Qur'an itself. Bennett also figure out that genuineness of the Prophet-hood of Muhammad ﷺ is never acceptable to the Christians because the same is not supported by the performance of miracles. Thus the orientalist along with the Christians do not and cannot believe in the miracles like night ascension and splitting of moon etc. He is focusing on the point that no miracle has been stated in the Qur'an as he says:

*Hadith* 208<sup>9</sup> says that Muhammad (ﷺ) pointed to the moon splitting when the skeptics demanded a miracle. Surah 2:23<sup>10</sup> implies that the Qur'an was

<sup>7</sup> Bennett, In Search of Muhammad ﷺ, 11-12.

<sup>8</sup> Bennett, In Search of Muhammad ﷺ, 64.

<sup>9</sup> حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْوَهَّابِ، حَدَّثَنَا بَشْرُ بْنُ الْمُفَضَّلِ، حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ أَبِي عَرُوبَةَ، عَنْ فَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، «أَنَّ أَهْلَ مَكَّةَ سَأَلُوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ يُرِيَهُمْ آيَةً، فَأَرَاهُمُ الْقَمَرَ شَقَّتَيْنِ، حَتَّى رَأَوْا جِرَاءَ بَيْنَهُمَا»

<sup>10</sup> وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

the only miracle to which Muhammad (ﷺ) could point as conformation of his mission.<sup>11</sup>

On the other hand Bennett himself has declared that:

Later, Christians would often deny that Muhammad (ﷺ) was a genuine Prophet because he did not perform miracles, although the *hadith* and *sira* describe some.<sup>12</sup>

As he thinks that the miracles performed by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) are fewer as compared with Jesus Peace Be upon Him, therefore it is indicated by him that Muhammad (ﷺ) is not the **Genuine Prophet**.

Clinton Bennett would not be disproving the Prophet Hood of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) this way because according to the Christian believe John the Baptist was a Prophet and He never performed miracles.

And many people came to him. They said, “Though John never performed a sign, all that John said about this man was true.”<sup>13</sup>

As far as the genuineness of the Prophet Hood is concerned, the Bible itself has declared that the performance of miracles is not a prime requisite of a Prophet-hood, therefore it is evident that if John the Baptist is the Prophet, why Muhammad (ﷺ) is not a Genuine Prophet? The most reliable chains that have most authentically related the miracles of the Prophet (ﷺ) are bothering Dr. Bennett, because he could not be able to challenge the genuineness of Prophet-hood of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

The quoted verse of Noble Qur’an by Clinton Bennett does not tally with his individual analogical deduction. He has not understood the diverse explanations and the multiple exegesis of said verse. Yet at least it is the common contention and understanding of Clinton Bennett with the Muslim scholars that the same verse implies and proves that Qur’an itself is the biggest miracle given to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). In other words Bennett has confessed and accepted the miraculous value of the said verse which by its broader implication declares all the verses of Qur’an as individual and collective miracle.

Simultaneously the said verse is the enforcement clause and the empowering section of the whole text of Qur’an to be the miracle of Allah Almighty, given to the holy Prophet (ﷺ) as an irrefutable and foolproof defense of the prophet hood of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

if one penetrates into the meanings of the Qur’an, it will be proven that its verses indicated that the Noble Prophet (ﷺ) has performed various miracles, although Qur’an is not a record book of miracles, neither it just the biography of Holy Prophet (ﷺ), it is mainly the Book of guidance, while *hadith* has recorded and preserved the miracles of Prophet (ﷺ).

All the verses of Qur’an are miracle along with the said verse of holy Qur’an. Various verses of holy Qur’an declared and confirmed the other miracles of the holy Prophet (ﷺ). The explanation and the exegesis of the verses give a detailed account of the same while Bennett has paid no attention to these explanations because of his selective method. He picks and chooses the

<sup>11</sup> Clinton Bennett, *Interpreting the Qur’an: A Guide for the Uninitiated*, (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), 42.

<sup>12</sup> Bennett, *Interpreting the Qur’an*, 94.

<sup>13</sup> John, 10:41, <https://biblehub.com/john/10-41.htm>.



meanings of his own choice. It is wrong to say that no other miracle is mentioned and declared in the Qur'an. It is the level of the Qur'anic understanding which Bennett lacks because of his liking and disliking.

So, this argument put forth by Bennett, that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ performed no miracles is without any reference. So it has no importance.

Bennett has repeatedly shown contradictions between Qur'an and *hadith* which makes an impression that it really so. The common reader may get the impression that *hadith* is not the explanation of the Holy Qur'an instead the contradiction. As he expresses at another occasion:

Muhammad's (ﷺ) alleged miracles are said to contradict the Qur'an... However, miracle stories which are found in *sahih* collections cannot be easily dismissed as 'weak' for example, the 'splitting asunder of the moon'.... This is often contrasted with Q2:23, which appears to assert that the Qur'an itself was the only 'miracle' to which Muhammad (ﷺ) could point.<sup>14</sup>

It is hereby understood that either Bennett has not tried to understand the miracle references of Qur'an or he has intentionally overlooked the performance of miracles of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Let us solve the question that, whether the Holy Prophet ﷺ has performed miracles and the Qur'an has testified it or not? As Bassam Zawadi<sup>15</sup> has answered the said issue satisfactorily in his article '*Does the Quran Say That Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) Did Not Perform Any Miracles?*'<sup>16</sup> Quoting from within the text of Qur'an and accordingly the following verses manifest the Holy status of Holy Prophet ﷺ and throw light on the above mentioned issue:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا يُكَلِّمُنَا اللَّهُ أَوْ تَنْزِيلُنَا آيَةً كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ تَشَابَهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ<sup>17</sup>

***And those who do not know say: Why does Allah not speak to us or there come to us a sign? Likewise, those who were before them said similar to their saying. Their hearts are alike. Indeed, We have clarified the signs to a nation who are certain.***

According to the verse, the disbelievers have repeated the demands of people of the early Prophets which is a usual path of the historic disbelievers. In the presence of a Prophet ﷺ and the Book what else can be demanded for the satisfaction of the people? By any means, the verse does not show that Qur'an was the only miracle given to the Prophet ﷺ.

According to the majority of Qur'anic commentators, the said verse was revealed in Medina which was especially referring to the Jews who demanded from Holy Prophet ﷺ to have God talk to them. This verse was sent down in response.

It's worth mentioning here that before this incident the Holy Prophet had already performed the miracle of splitting ascender of moon in front of pagans of Mecca.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Bennett, In Search of Muhammad, 45.

<sup>15</sup> He is an Islamic apologist and interfaith debater.

<sup>16</sup> Bassam Zawadi, Does the Quran Say That Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) Did Not Perform Any Miracles, [https://www.call-to-monotheism.com/does\\_the\\_quran\\_say\\_that\\_prophet\\_muhammad\\_peace\\_be\\_upon\\_him\\_did\\_not\\_perform\\_any\\_miracles](https://www.call-to-monotheism.com/does_the_quran_say_that_prophet_muhammad_peace_be_upon_him_did_not_perform_any_miracles)

<sup>17</sup> Al Baqarah: 2/118.

<sup>18</sup> Ismail bin Umar ibn e Kathir, Tafsir al Qur'an al Azeem, Research: Muhammad Hussain Shams ud Din (Bairoot: Dar al kutab al ilmiya, 1919AH), 278/1.

This verse does not show that the Beloved Prophet ﷺ did not perform miracles. but it shows that the disbelievers accused the Prophet ﷺ of not performing miracles and there is a big difference between the two.

وَلَنْ أَتَيْتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ وَمَا بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ وَلَنْ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّكَ إِذَا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ<sup>19</sup>

Sense of the said verse is that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was given multiple miracles in addition to Qur'an, yet the disbelievers were not convinced and the Allah has foretold the Prophet ﷺ that even if you fulfill all the demands of disbelievers, they would neither believe you, nor they can believe each other. As the previous Ummahs who have disbelieved the signs even after observing them as Qur'an stated:

وَمَا مَنَعَنَا أَنْ نُرْسِلَ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا أَنْ كَذَّبَ بِهَا الْأُولُونَ وَآتَيْنَا ثَمُودَ النَّاقَةَ مُبْصِرَةً فَظَلَمُوا بِهَا وَمَا نُرْسِلُ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا تَخْوِيفًا<sup>20</sup>

Once again this verse is related to sending the signs that the people of Makkah peculiarly asked for, just like how Thamud specifically asked for the female camel. Allah Almighty sent it down to them but not as a mercy because He knows that if He Fulfill their demands they would still disbelieve. In order to fulfill His promise, Allah would be obliged to destroy them and not sending the demanded signs was actually for their own good.

Again the verse does not state that no signs have ever been sent down. There are numerous verses in the text of holy Qur'an who affirmed and reaffirmed the happening of miracles as given below:

وَيَقُولُونَ لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَا الْغَيْبُ لِلَّهِ فَانْتَظِرُوا إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الْمُنتَظِرِينَ<sup>21</sup>  
وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ<sup>22</sup>  
وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ أُنَابَ<sup>23</sup>

The above mentioned verses indicate that the demand of manifestation of miracles was made by the disbelievers from the Prophet and it does not imply that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had not performed the miracles and none has been thus mentioned in the Noble Qur'an. The demand of a particular miracle from any Prophet does not necessarily mean that the Prophet had not performed any miracle before such demand.

Bennett suggests that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has not been given any miracle except the Qur'an while Jesus Peace Be upon Him has declared Himself in the Gospel of Mark that he has been given no such sign:

The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for **a sign from heaven.** He sighed deeply and said, "Why does this generation ask for a miraculous sign? I tell you the truth; no sign will be given to it."<sup>24</sup>

While understanding the Gospel and the general policy of other Prophets, the hard non-believers are discouraged to demand for the miracles rather they are advised to believe in the truth of the

<sup>19</sup> Al Baqarah: 2/145.

<sup>20</sup> Al Asra'a: 17/59.

<sup>21</sup> Younas: 10/20.

<sup>22</sup> Al-Ra'ad: 13/7.

<sup>23</sup> Al-Ra'ad: 13/27.

<sup>24</sup> Gospel of Mark, 8:11-13, <https://biblehub.com/mark/8-11.htm>.

Prophets. They would still persist in asking Jesus Peace be upon Him for a miracle even after He performed several miracles such as raising the dead back to life, curing the blind etc. Therefore it is learned that Dr. Bennett has not properly gone through the Gospel of Mark.

There is another example of the lack of information about the Gospel on the hand of Bennett, Mathew has disclosed in his Gospel that Jesus Peace be upon Him has claimed that he had been given the only miracle of Jonah.

Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign (*semeion*) from you." <sup>39</sup>He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a miraculous sign (*semeion*)! But none will be given it **except the sign (*semeion*) of the Prophet Jonah.**"<sup>25</sup>

Bassam Zawadi has written another article named '*Did Jesus (Peace be upon Him) Perform Any Signs? If He Did Then How Many?*' in which he has highlighted in detail the controversy of Gospel regarding the performance of miracles by Jesus Peace be upon Him or otherwise. He has required a review and inquiry of various statements of Jesus Peace be upon Him regarding the performance of miracles and a blank refusal to the Jews not to give any miracle except that of Jonah.

After the solemn declaration that all the Muslims believe in the Genuineness of Prophet-hood of Jesus Peace be upon Him, it is hereby asked from Bennett what he believes about the genuineness of the Prophet-hood of Jesus Peace be upon Him in the perspective of Gospel learnings?

All the above mentioned discussion implies that Bennett wants to prove that there is no miracle mentioned in Qur'an except the Qur'an itself because he wants to use Qur'an as a discarding device for all the miracles. Conclusively speaking, if the same is taken to be true, then the basic book of Muslims would be devoid of all the miracles. Therefore resultantly it has become easier to disregard the forthcoming miracles of holy Prophet ﷺ.

### 3. Humiliation of Miracles

We see that Bennett has tried to deny the miracles mentioned in *Hadith* and Sirah and has taken the Qur'an as the only miracle of the prophet ﷺ. But as observed in the above lines, he has denied the miracles mentioned in the text of Qur'an because previously it was understood that since Bennett accepts the Qur'an as a miracle therefore he must accept those miracles mentioned in the Qur'an. It is time and again the habit of all orientalist that they try to convince the reader by their reasoning and let their intentions go un-noticed. They start from denying *Hadith* while they end on defying Qur'an by their arguments that they previously have highlighted and accepted as a whole truth. They use the status of Qur'an in discrediting *hadith* while they argue out of *hadith* to defy the Qur'anic parts. After accepting Qur'an a Prophetic miracle, he treats the parts of text of the Qur'an non-seriously and rather humiliating the acts of God like sending 3,000 angels in the battle of Badr which in his point of view was needless miracle. As he says that:

In the battle of Badr "However, if the Muslim army was also God's instrument, were the 3,000 angels necessary?"<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Gospel of Methew, 12:38-39, <https://biblehub.com/matthew/12-38.htm>.

<sup>26</sup> Bennett, In Search of Muhammad, 49.



The answer to this question is a question too. Was Gabriel necessary to take messages of God to the Prophets? Was Taboot-e-Sakina indispensable for the victory of Bani Israel in the presence of the army of Bani Israel as an instrument of God?

Allah has created this universe as an organism of materialize reasoning. So Allah maintains its system through some media He likes.

Bennett has failed to recall that even 313 Muslim soldiers were no needed in Badr non believers could have been ruined by wind or sound. He has tried his level best to discredit or exclude miracles from the biography of the Prophet of Islam ﷺ and also from Islamic traditions. He has any how tried to relate the miracles to the thousand and one night's era and he has suggested that in the perspective of 'Thousand and One Nights' stories, the Muslims must have expected such miracles from the Prophet ﷺ and thus have manufactured themselves such allusions. While the Dr. Bennett has forgotten the alleged miracles of Jesus Peace be upon Him mentioned in Gospels, and he has not tried to question even one of the Gospel miracle. As he supposed:

In considering the question of miracles, it is worth reminding ourselves that the seventh century is far removed from our own. People loved fairytales, and tales of the extraordinary. That an extraordinary man was surrounded by extraordinary happenings would hardly have stretched their imagination. Indeed, the possibility that Muhammad (ﷺ) had not performed miracles was probably harder for people to grasp than that he had. At about the same time, too, the wonderful *thousand and One Nights* (with its magic lamp and wish-fulfilling genii) was gaining popularity and, although pre-Islamic in origin, its contents and settings were being adapted to the Islamic context; it begins, 'In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate ... and grace and blessings be upon our Lord Muhammad (ﷺ), Prince of the Apostles'. Many miracles recorded in the *sira-hadith* may perhaps best be explained as the product of zealous but misplaced adoration of the Prophet.<sup>27</sup>

Bennett's supposition is an effort to jeopardize the biography, the system of *hadith* and the integrity of the companions of Holy Prophet ﷺ by mere suppositions, probabilities and far stretched possibilities without comparing Muhammadan biography with that of Jesus Peace be upon Him where he used another standard for Christian Gospels. Historically speaking, Jesus era is closer to *thousand and one nights*' era as compared with Islam. Bennett never dared to similarize the John's Gospel or Mathew's Gospel with thousand and one night's stories. He has not noticed and realized the fool proof sensor of Ilm-ul-Hadith and the highest standard of traditional methodology adopted by the companions and developed till contemporary times, having unbroken chains and trains of transmissions up till the time of Prophet ﷺ Himself.

The Qur'an must be read as a whole along with the proper context of other Qur'anic verses and Hadith. By doing so one can know that the Qur'an does indeed confirm the miracles of holy Prophet ﷺ

### Conclusion

As miracles are especially and compulsorily related to the divine beliefs and religions therefore, they have been criticized firstly by the non believers and secondly by the scientified

<sup>27</sup> Bennett, In Search of Muhammad, 50.

approach especially in the west. Yet some scientists started accepting the possibility of happening of the miracles as the night ascension of the Prophet ﷺ after evolution of theory of relativity. Therefore, a new chapter was started by the introduction of theory of relativity of Einstein. We can say that this way the concept of the miracles has been synthesized even in the west and the most advanced sciences throughout the global village of earth. Modern science and theory of relativity opened the gate of miracle acceptance. Most of the thinkers were receptive to the possibility of miracles with the exception of orientalists who were still not ready to accept the Islamic miracles and yet they accept the same kind of miracles associated with the Christ as Bennett has done the same.

Bennett is not an exception to the above category and has followed the path of orientalists he has discussed, criticized and opined on all the major miracles of the Prophet ﷺ. He has earnestly made use of the disagreement of Muslim biographers and historians and has given preference over one another. Precisely, he chooses the befitting and suiting version from Islamic literature.

It has been learned that Bennett has developed a methodology of his own that firstly he exclude the possibility of the happening of miracles scientifically or historically and thereafter he disregards the miracles altogether, using the weakest reports from Islamic traditional system.

At times he has tried to create suspects in the historic facts of the biography of the holy Prophet ﷺ by quoting the split of narrations regarding the subject. Especially he has intentionally tried to create and highlight the suspicions regarding the miracles and thereafter he had tried to exclude the miracles altogether from the Islamic literature and to give an impression that Qur'an does not mention any miracle. According to him the miracles where as mentioned in *hadith* and Sirah enjoy the status of not more than the stories of *thousand and one nights*.

While discussing and reconstructing the biography of Holy Prophet ﷺ, Clinton Bennett has been gradually diverting his favors towards the radical critics of Islam by adopting the negative version and the prejudiced findings of the orientalists. He has tried to mix up the things, distorted the historic traditions and finally said that the life of the holy Prophet ﷺ is acceptable if the miracles are taken out of the biography<sup>28</sup>.

Conclusively speaking the miracles itself are not troubling Bennett but in reality it is the association of miracles with the person of Muhammad ﷺ which disturbs him.

<sup>28</sup> See above reference no 5. Bennett, In Search of Muhammad ﷺ, 64.