


## *The Numerical Miraculousness of the Qur'an: Evaluating Rashad Khalifa's 52 Claims*

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### ABSTRACT:

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The study of the dimensions of the Qur'an's miraculous nature has been a central focus of Qur'anic scholars since the time of its revelation. Numerous aspects have been identified as facets of the Qur'an's miraculousness. One such aspect, arguably first significantly claimed by Rashad Khalifa, is the mathematical structure or numerical miraculousness of the Qur'an. Khalifa published his findings in a book titled "Qur'an: Visual Presentation of the Miracle," wherein he outlined 52 examples of the Qur'an's mathematical miracles. These examples include 21 cases of word and letter repetitions, 2 cases of abjad letter calculations, and 29 cases involving the Qur'an's disjointed letters (*al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭa'āt*), all connected to the number 19, which Khalifa considered a divine code. This study first reflects on the concept of the Qur'an's numerical miracle and outlines criteria for its verification. Subsequently, it examines Khalifa's computational criteria and evaluates all 52 of his claims. Upon thorough review, it was determined that Khalifa's calculations and conclusions are either incorrect or lack at least one necessary condition for establishing a numerical miraculousness.

**KEYWORDS:** Mathematical structure of the Qur'an, Numerical miraculousness, the Qur'an and science, Rashad Khalifa, Number 19, Disjointed letters, *al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭa'āt*

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## 1. Introduction

The precise onset of specialized discussions on the Qur'an's miraculousness is unclear, but it likely began in the early centuries following the Qur'an's revelation. Since then, the exploration of the Qur'an's miraculous aspects has consistently engaged Qur'anic scholars, identifying over 80 facets of the Qur'an's miraculous nature (Rezaei Esfahani 2013). The Qur'an, as evidence of the Prophet's (PBUH) prophethood and a guide for humanity, was revealed in a time and place where Arabic eloquence and rhetoric were at their peak. Some disbelievers regarded the Qur'an as ancient myths, claiming they could produce a similar text (Q. 8:31), to which the Qur'an challenged them. This challenge, however, is perpetual and not limited to the Qur'an's initial revelation period (Tabataba'i 2011, 1:57). Nonetheless, some Qur'anic scholars like Aisha Abd al-Rahman (2003, 68-65), argue that while the Qur'an remains eternal, its challenge is no longer applicable today. Abdullah Darraz (1997) states that anyone doubting the Qur'an's miraculousness and its inimitability should consult the scholars of their time; if they concede, it affirms the Qur'an's miraculous nature, as history shows no one has succeeded in this challenge.

The concept of scientific miracles in the Qur'an refers to instances where the Qur'an, a religious text revealed over 1400 years ago, is believed to contain knowledge that aligns with or anticipates modern scientific understanding. This idea posits that certain verses in the Qur'an, despite being revealed in a pre-scientific era, contain descriptions or allusions to natural phenomena that have only been confirmed through contemporary scientific research (Barati & Paymard 2022, Shojaie & Mazaheri Tehrani 2022, Besharati & Besharati 2022, Moradi 2022, Koutb 2022, Jafari 2023). Proponents argue that such instances serve as evidence of the Qur'an's divine origin, suggesting that the knowledge contained within it could not have been known by any human at the time of its revelation.

In recent centuries, one claimed aspect of the Qur'an's miraculous nature is its numerical structure. Although some attribute the numerical miracle concept to al-Suyūṭī, there is no evidence supporting this. Therefore, Rashad Khalifa is often recognized as the first to propose the Qur'an's numerical miracle, although it remains unproven and is considered an extraordinary phenomenon rather than a definitive miracle (Rezaei Esfahani 2013).

Numerous studies have criticized Khalifa's claims and the broader concept of the Qur'an's numerical miracle. While these efforts are valuable, they often lack comprehensive criteria for establishing a numerical miracle and do not fully address all 52 of Khalifa's claims. Given the interest in numerical and mathematical relationships in the Qur'an, it is crucial to

establish clear criteria for a numerical miracle. Khalifa's claims warrant thorough examination to discern valid claims and prevent the propagation of incorrect ideas. This research aims to answer whether a numerical miracle in the Qur'an can be proven and, if so, what criteria it must meet. It also evaluates whether Khalifa's 52 claims can be accepted as a numerical miracle. The paper will review the literature on the numerical miracle, define key concepts, and analyze Khalifa's claims in detail.

## 2. *Literature Review*

Contemporary Qur'anic scholars have examined the Qur'an's numerical structure through various lenses, such as the repetition of letters, words, verses, and chapters. Proponents of the numerical miracle argue that the Qur'an's mathematical structure is a sign of its miraculous nature, asserting that no author could create such a structure by chance. Rashad Khalifa, in his book, claims the Qur'an is based on the number 19, with astonishing numerical relationships in its verses, chapters, letters, and words. However, this theory has faced significant criticism from scholars and Qur'anic commentators, resulting in numerous studies and publications addressing and criticizing the numerical miracle.

Abd al-Razzaq Nawfal (1987) discusses numerical patterns in word repetition, claiming equal repetition of synonymous and antonymous words in the Qur'an. Rafiq Abu al-Saud (1993) similarly highlights key word repetitions in his book. Abd al-Daem al-Kaheel (2005) provides evidence for the numerical miracle in the Qur'an's verses, chapters, entire text, disjointed letters, and stories. Nasser Makarem Shirazi (1993) discusses Khalifa's work without passing judgment, suggesting that further study is needed.

Opponents of the numerical miracle include Hussein Naji Muhammad Mohyiddin (1984), who in "Nineteen angels (a statement that the falsehood of the numerical miracle of the Qur'an is a Baha'i deception)," rejects Khalifa's claims and associates the number 19 with Bahaism. Yazdani (1996) in his article, "The Numerical Miracle and Mathematical Order of the Qur'an," criticizes Khalifa's work as a deviation. Muhammad Hassan Hito (1989) supports Mohyiddin's views in "The Qur'anic Miracle: Scientific and Unseen Miracles." Bassam Nihad Jarrar (1994), in "The Miracle of Number 19 in the Holy Qur'an," accuses Khalifa of fabricating evidence to support his claims. In the book "The Miracle of the Qur'an: Statistical Analysis of the Disjointed Letters" by Ayatollahi (1986), the author examines the disjointed letters in general and then conducts a statistical analysis of each letter in various chapters of the Qur'an. In "The

Mathematical Challenge of the Holy Qur'an with Other Books" by Vahedian (1972), the author uses mathematical methods to demonstrate the order in the number and verses of the Qur'an. He also claims that Rashad Khalifa, in his translation of the Qur'an, disrupted the order based on the number 19 by omitting two verses.

Alavi (2007), in his book "The Qur'an and Mathematics," specifically examines the theory of the numerical miracle of the Qur'an and seeks to prove the existence of mathematical order and proportion within its structure. He particularly focuses on the numbers 7 and 19 in the Qur'an, arguing that these numbers hold special significance. The author provides evidence and examples from the Qur'an to support the theory of the numerical miracle. In the article by Talebpour et al. (2022) titled "Introducing a Novel Method in Evaluating the Scientific Miracles of the Qur'an," a specific mathematical order method is mentioned in the classification section of methods for proving the miracles of the Qur'an. The challenges of this method are identified as its generalizability, logic, lack of ambiguity, and the impossibility of replication by humans.

Up to now, many articles have examined the claims of the numerical miracles of the Qur'an, e.g. "Numerical Miracle and Mathematical Order in the Qur'an" by Yazdani (1996); "The Numerical Miracle of the Qur'an: Truth or Illusion?" by Qadouri (2005; 2006); "Research on the Theory of the Numerical Miracle and Mathematical Order of the Qur'an" by Nowruzi (2007); "Evaluation and Critique of the Theory of the Numerical Miracle of the Holy Qur'an" by Pahlevan and Shafiei (2009); "A Bibliography of Numerical and Mathematical Miracles in the Qur'an" by Nowruzi (2011); "Review of the Numerical Miracle of the Holy Qur'an from Abd al-Razzaq Nawfal's view" by Karimi Nia (2011); and "Review and Analysis of the Numerical Miracle in the Holy Qur'an" by Ahmadi Amouyi and Farahmand (2020).

The literature review indicates that opinions on the numerical miracles of the Qur'an are varied. Some deny it, some seek to prove it, and others believe that the numerical miracle, as an aspect of the Qur'an's miraculous nature, cannot be proven and is merely an intriguing proportionality of numbers.

### *3. Concepts and Terminology*

In any scientific discussion, defining key terms is essential for clarity. This section explains the main terms used in this study.

### 3.1. Disjointed Letters

Of the 114 Qur'anic chapters, 29 begin with disjointed letters (*al-hurūf al-muqaṭṭa'āt*), comprising half of the 28 Arabic alphabet letters: *alif, hā, hā, ṭā, yā, kāf, lām, mīm, nūn, sīn, 'ayn, ṣād, qāf, rā*. These letters appear at the beginning of chapters after *Basmalah* (Fazeli Biarjmandi 2009). They are often seen as mysterious symbols at the start of certain Qur'anic chapters (Anvari 2002, 2506).

### 3.2. Abjad Letters

Abjad letters represent numbers (Anvari 2002, 210). The most common abjad system divides the letters into eight groups, mirroring the Hebrew-Aramaic alphabet. This similarity suggests that Arabs adopted their alphabet from the Hebrew-Aramaic system (Moein 1985, 119).

### 3.3. Basmalah

The phrase *bism al-lāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm* (*Basmalah*) starts Qur'anic chapters, except for Surah al-Tawbah, which lacks the *Basmalah* due to its denunciation of polytheists. However, Surah al-Naml contains the *Basmalah* twice (Fazeli Biarjmandi 2009).

## 4. Defining the Numerical Miracle of the Qur'an

This section reviews Qur'anic scholars' views on the numerical miracle and outlines criteria for its validation. Some researchers see the numerical miracle as a miraculous numerical order, implying that the precise repetition of letters and words in the Qur'an signifies its divine origin, as no human author could achieve such order (Yazdani 1996). Nawfal (1987), following Khalifa, argues that numbers in the Qur'an are miraculous, requiring divine power. He emphasizes the importance of recognizing this aspect due to the advancements in mathematics and its significance. The Encyclopedia of Qur'anic Sciences defines the numerical miracle as a form of content-related miracle, indicating a unique numerical harmony in the Qur'an. Saravi (2007) highlights the precise arrangement of words and their derivatives in the Qur'an as examples of the numerical miracle. Karimi Nia (2008, 152) views numerical miracles as significant in an age focused on science, suggesting that if proven scientifically, they could reveal many hidden truths in the Qur'an. Yazdani (1996, 257) emphasizes that while precise repetition in the Qur'an exists, its miraculously numerical nature requires further

verification.

Careful consideration of these definitions reveals that many Qur'anic scholars believe in the existence of mathematical order within the Qur'an, which some refer to as numerical miracles, while others do not hold this view. It appears that if extraordinary numerical and mathematical order exists in the Qur'an, or any other text, that surpasses human capability, it can be considered a form of miracle (Talebpour et al. 2022). For such a claim of numerical miracles in the Qur'an (or any other text) to be valid, it must meet the following conditions:

- **Non-trivial Mathematical Relationships:** For instance, if someone claims that the repetition of several words in the Qur'an is independently a multiple of 19 and in a separate claim that their sum is also a multiple of 19, the second claim is self-evident and not independent of the first one. Since we know that if several numbers are multiples of another number, their sum is also a multiple of that number (e.g., see Khalifa's 25th claim evaluation).
- **General and Not Subjective Mathematical Relationships:** The relationships should be general and logical, not complex or subjective and individual to each case. For example, Khalifa's 15th claim involves a formula where if the three *Basmalah* of Surahs al-Fātiḥah, Hūd, and al-Naml (which are in the beginning of al-Fātiḥah and within the text of the other two) are added with the sum of verse numbers and surah numbers, the result is 114, which is a multiple of 19. This mathematical relationship is complex, follows no specific logic, and is not used elsewhere.
- **Probability of Randomness is Close to Zero:** For example, if someone claims that the repetition of the letter "S" in a text is a multiple of two, the probability of this feature occurring by chance in any text is 50%, and it cannot alone be considered a miracle.
- **Incapable of Being Reproduced by Humans:** The wonder must exceed normal limits, making intentional achievement nearly impossible. For example, merely having a word or letter in a surah or even the entire Qur'an be a multiple of a specific number—however large—alone is insufficient to prove a numerical miracle.

It is evident that the four mentioned conditions are all necessary and sufficient for achieving a numerical miracle, and the absence of any of these conditions can seriously challenge the claim of a numerical miracle.

## 5. *Rashad Khalifa and the Claim of the Numerical Miracle of the Qur'an*

To date, the theory of the numerical miracle of the Qur'an and Khalifa's claims have been a topic of discussion among Muslim scholars and thinkers. In the continuation of the discussion, we will first provide a brief biography of him and then examine the computational criteria for counting letters and words in his theory of the numerical miracle of the Qur'an.

Khalifa, who claimed the theory of the numerical miracle of the Qur'an, was born into a Sufi family in Egypt. He completed his primary and secondary education in his hometown of Tanta. He then went to Cairo for higher education and studied at Ain Shams University in agriculture. He continued his higher education at the University of California, Riverside, obtaining a Ph.D. in plant biochemistry in 1961. After receiving his doctorate, Khalifa worked at the same university. He believed that the number 19 was the key to the Qur'an's miraculous code. For three years, with the help of a computer, he identified instances of the number 19 or its multiples in the Qur'an (Ayatollahi 1986).

In the preface to his book, Khalifa described the Qur'an as a sensory miracle with a mathematical and astonishing order among its letters and words, presenting this order as proof of the Qur'an's preservation and miracle. He claimed that this great Qur'anic secret was revealed by him after the Prophet's era, referencing verse 88 of Surah al-Isrā'. To prove his claim, he pointed to verses 30 and 31 of Surah al-Muddaththir, stating that the guardians of Hell are 19. He also introduced himself as one of the messengers in his translation of the Qur'an for verse 3 of Surah Yāsīn (Figure 1).

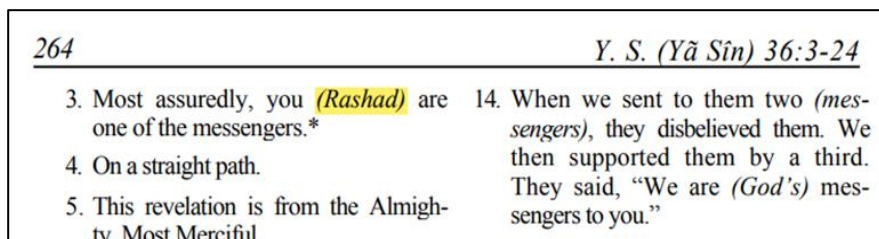


Figure 1. Image from Rashad Khalifa's *Qur'an Translation* (2000).

The above image is an excerpt from Khalifa's Qur'an translation. Under the third verse of Surah Yāsīn (Indeed, you are one of the messengers), he introduces himself as a messenger, writing, "Most assuredly, you (Rashad) are one of the messengers" (Khalifa 2000, 264). He also cites verse 40 of

Surah al-Aḥzāb, introducing Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the last prophet, stating, "Despite the clear and explicit introduction of this verse regarding Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), most Muslims insist that he is both the last prophet and the last messenger," which he considers a tragic human disaster. According to him, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the last prophet but not the last messenger, and he introduces himself as one of the messengers who discovered the Qur'an's mathematical code (Khalifa 2000, 254).

According to Khalifa in his book, inspired by verses 30 and 31 of Surah al-Muddaththir, he outlines five objectives for the selection of the number 19:

1. A punishment for disbelievers.
2. To convince Jews and Christians that the Qur'an is a divine book.
3. To strengthen the faith of believers.
4. To remove doubts from the hearts of Muslims, Christians, and Jews about the authenticity of the Qur'an.
5. To expose the hypocrites and disbelievers who do not accept the numerical order of the Qur'an (Khalifa 1982).

In his book, Khalifa makes 52 claims about the connection of the Qur'an's numbers and repetitions with the number 19, considering this the greatest miracle of the Qur'an in the present age. In this study, the criteria for counting words and letters in Khalifa's theory are examined. These criteria are extracted by meticulously reviewing all of Khalifa's claims in his book and calculating them according to his counting in his tables. The criteria for Khalifa's calculation of letters and words are as follows:

- The *alif maqṣūrah* is not counted as a letter.
- The *shaddah (tashdād)* is not counted as two letters (e.g., Q. 96:1).
- In the discussion of the initial phrase of the Qur'anic surahs, Khalifa only considers *Basmalah* in Surah al-Fātiḥah as part of the Qur'an (although he occasionally deviates from this rule in counting disjointed letters).
- Since Khalifa used a corpus where the words *wa* and *mā* are attached to the next words, he does not count them as separate words in his calculations, unlike other similar words, whereas he does count *lā* (e.g., Q. 96:5, 110:3; 68:1).
- Calculations are based on the Uthmanic script rather than its pronunciation (e.g., the term *yā ayyuhā* is counted as one word).



- In the letter count, a standalone *hamza* is counted as one letter (e.g., *jā'a* in Q. 110:1).
- Khalifa considers verses Q. 9:128-129 to be interpolations and does not include them in his calculations (Khalifa 2000).

## 6. Evaluation of Rashad Khalifa's Claims

In this section, each of Khalifa's claims from his book (1982) will be listed, followed by an evaluation and critique from two perspectives. The first aspect is to assess the accuracy of the calculations according to Khalifa's criteria. The second, more significant aspect is to determine whether these claims align with the criteria for numerical miracles, implying that even if some calculations are correct, it is debatable whether they can be considered miraculous. Efforts have been made to accurately represent Khalifa's claims, including direct quotations from his book, and where specific calculations are referenced, attempts have been made to include images from his book.

### 6.1. Claim 1

The first and most crucial verse of the Qur'an, *bism Allāh al-rahmān al-rahīm* (Q. 1:1) consists of 19 letters.

**Evaluation:** According to Khalifa's criteria for counting letters, this claim is correct. He does not count the *shaddah* as a separate letter and considers only the written letters (following the Uthmanic script) without including read but unwritten letters. However, it should be noted that this specific instance, based on particular criteria, does not constitute a miraculous or superhuman feature on its own.

### 6.2. Claim 2

The Qur'an has 114 surahs, which is a multiple of 19. The last surah of the Qur'an (Surah 114) is al-Nās, which has 6 verses:  $19 \times 6 = 114$

**Evaluation:** The fact that the Qur'an has 114 surahs, a multiple of 19, is accurate and noteworthy. However, the second part of the claim, which extracts the multiple of 19 from the number of verses in Surah al-Nās, is subjective and lacks general applicability.

### 6.3. Claim 3

The first verses revealed to the Prophet are the initial verses of Surah al-

‘Alaq, which consist of 19 words.

**Evaluation:** In counting the words, Khalifa uses a specific method previously mentioned. Moreover, this claim pertains to the narrative context and the occasions of revelation, which is a subject of dispute and not directly linked to the Qur’an. Additionally, if this approach was consistently applied in other sections, it would be more acceptable.

#### 6.4. Claim 4

The total number of letters in the first five verses of Surah al-‘Alaq is 76, a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** The issues raised in the previous claim apply here as well.

#### 6.5. Claim 5

The total number of verses in Surah 96 is 19.

**Evaluation:** This claim is not directly related to the Qur’an and requires verification of the contextual narrations. While the calculation according to Khalifa's criteria is correct, focusing only on the total number of verses in this surah (not just the initially revealed verses) makes the claim subjective and lacking general applicability.

#### 6.6. Claim 6

If the surahs of the Qur’an are counted from the end to the beginning, Surah al-‘Alaq is the 19th surah.

**Evaluation:** The calculation is correct. However, the subjective nature of this counting method (from the end rather than the beginning) makes it less generally applicable.

#### 6.7. Claim 7

The total number of letters in Surah al-‘Alaq is 285, a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** This claim also pertains to the narrative context and requires contextual verification. Moreover, this type of calculation (total letters in the surah) is not repeated in subsequent revelations, making this claim specific to the first revelation and lacking general applicability.

## 6.8. Claim 8

The last revelation of the Qur'an consists of 19 words.

**Evaluation:** This claim, too, pertains to the narrative context and requires contextual verification. Although the calculation is correct, unlike the first revelation, the total number of letters in the last revelation is 80, which is not a multiple of 19. Furthermore, the last revelation is not considered to be these verses; the last complete surah is Surah al-Naṣr. Therefore, the first complete surah is al-Fātiḥah, not the initial verses of Surah al-ʿAlaq.

## 6.9. Claim 9

The first verse of the last revelation (Surah al-Naṣr) contains 19 letters.

**Evaluation:** First, the claim depends on the accuracy of the narrative context, which has not been substantiated. Second, there is no unique characteristic of the first verse of this surah that warrants counting its letters. Third, why focus on letters and not words? This claim exemplifies highly subjective and non-general claims, suggesting that Khalifa is making considerable effort to find the number 19 rather than the number revealing itself as a miracle in the Qur'an.

## 6.10. Claim 10

The second revelation of the Qur'an, in the order of revelation (Q. 68:1-9), consists of 38 words, a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** Besides the critique under the third claim, the second revelation in narrative contexts is the first 6 verses of Surah al-Qalam, not the first 9 (Majlisī 1982, 18: 229). Furthermore, why were the letters not counted in this instance as they were for Surah al-ʿAlaq? This claim, therefore, does not meet the criterion of generality in numerical miracles.

## 6.11. Claim 11

The third revelation of the Qur'an, in the order of revelation (Q. 73:1-10), consists of 57 words, a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** Besides the claim not being purely related to the Qur'an, like claims 9 and 10, the order of revelation has not been consistently followed. According to some commentators, Surah al-Muzzammil was

revealed early in Mecca and some believe it was the second or third surah revealed to the Prophet (Tabataba'i 2011, 20:60). Others also mention that Surah al-Muzzammil was revealed after Surah al-Qalam, except for verses 10, 11, 12, and 20, which some commentators believe were revealed later. Some also believe that, given the coherence and connection of these verses with the previous ones, they were revealed simultaneously, but verse 20 was revealed at a different time. Therefore, Surah al-Muzzammil was revealed gradually and consists of two units of revelation: verses 1 to 19 and verse 20 (Gharavi 2017).

### 6.12. Claim 12

The fourth revelation of the Qur'an (Q. 74:1-30) contains the number 19.

**Evaluation:** In addition to the claim not being purely related to the Qur'an, the reference to the first 30 verses of Surah al-Muddaththir as the fourth revelation is not substantiated. Furthermore, why were no calculations made for the number of verses, words, or letters in the fourth revelation and only the mention of the number 19 in the 30th verse was considered? These factors indicate the non-generality of the claims for proving numerical miracles.

### 6.13. Claim 13

In the order of revelation, immediately after the number 19 mentioned in Q. 74:30, Surah al-Fātiḥah was revealed, the first verse of which, *bism Allāh al-rahmān al-rahīm* (Q. 1:1), contains 19 letters.

**Evaluation:** Besides the fact that the claim depends on the accuracy of the narrative context, it is clear that the entire Surah al-Fātiḥah was revealed together, and according to previous instances, either the number of verses, the number of words, or the number of letters should be multiples of 19, while he has only calculated the letters of *Basmalah*. Furthermore, it is claimed that Surah al-Fātiḥah was revealed immediately after verse Q. 74:30, but no historical references are mentioned to support this claim.

### 6.14. Claim 14

All words in the opening phrase of the Qur'an, *bism Allāh al-rahmān al-rahīm* (Q. 1:1), are repeated in the entire Qur'an in multiples of 19. The first word, *ism*, is repeated 19 times in the Qur'an.

**Evaluation:** The word *ism* is repeated 14 times, the word *bi-ism* 4 times,

*al-ism* once, and *bism* 3 times in the Qur'an, making a total of 22, not 19. Furthermore, Khalifa claimed that each word in the phrase *Basmalah* is repeated in multiples of 19 in the Qur'an, but if the first word is *ism*, there are 22 instances. If only *bism* is considered, there are three instances, and if *bism* and *bi-ism* are combined, there are seven instances. None of these conditions result in the number 19 or its multiple. Here, Khalifa subtracted 3 instances of *bism* from 22 *ism* to reach 19, which is clearly complex and lacks logic.

### 6.15. Claim 15

The word *bism* with this unusual spelling appears three times in Surahs 1, 11, and 27. If we sum the number of occurrences (3) with the Surah numbers containing this word (1+11+27) and the verse numbers in which *bism* appears in these Surahs (1+41+30), we obtain the number 114, which is a multiple of 19.  $6 \times 19 = 114 = 30 + 27 + 41 + 11 + 1 + 1 + 36$

**Evaluation:** This claim is a perfect example of complexity and lack of logic.

### 6.16. Claim 16

The second word of the opening phrase, Allah, appears 2698 times in the Qur'an, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** It appears that Khalifa calculated this number as follows: the word *Allah* appears 2505 times, *lil-lāh* 143 times, *bil-lāh* 140 times, *tal-lāh* 9 times, *fal-lāh* 6 times, and *fa-lil-lāh* 6 times in the Qur'an, totaling 2809. Since Khalifa considers only *Basmalah* in Surah al-Fātiḥah as part of the Qur'an, by subtracting the 112 occurrences of *Basmalah*, the number 2697 is obtained. However, contrary to his computational criteria, he includes *Allah* in Q. 9:129. As previously mentioned, Khalifa omitted the last two verses of Surah al-Tawbah in his translation of the Qur'an and did not consider them part of the Qur'an. Nonetheless, *Allah* in these two verses is also counted, which contradicts his criteria.

Figures 2, 3, and 4 show excerpts from tables in Khalifa's book indicating the Surahs and verses where the word *Allah* is used. A detailed examination of Khalifa's calculations regarding the word *Allah* in the Qur'an led to the following conclusions:

- Contrary to his computational criteria, the word *Allah* was counted in Q. 9:129.

- In Q. 46:23, he counted two instances of *Allah* instead of one, but did not count the one instance in verse 33.
- In Q. 58:4, he counted three instances of *Allah* whereas only two exist.
- In Q. 4:64, he counted two instances of *Allah* instead of three.
- In Q. 5:47, he counted three instances of *Allah* instead of two.

Ultimately, based on Khalifa's computational criteria, the word *Allah* appears 2697 times in the Qur'an, which is not a multiple of 19.

List of Chapters & Verses containing the word 'Allah ﷻ'					
NO.	CHAPTER	VERSE	NO.	CHAPTER	VERSE
1201	9	71	1241	9	102
1202	9	71	1242	9	103
1203	9	71	1243	9	104
1204	9	72	1244	9	104
1205	9	72	1245	9	105
1206	9	74	1246	9	106
1207	9	74	1247	9	106
1208	9	74	1248	9	107
1209	9	75	1249	9	107
1210	9	77	1250	9	108
1211	9	78	1251	9	109
1212	9	78	1252	9	109
1213	9	79	1253	9	110
1214	9	80	1254	9	111
1215	9	80	1255	9	111
1216	9	80	1256	9	111
1217	9	81	1257	9	112
1218	9	81	1258	9	114
1219	9	83	1259	9	115
1220	9	84	1260	9	115
1221	9	85	1261	9	116
1222	9	86	1262	9	116
1223	9	89	1263	9	117
1224	9	90	1264	9	119
1225	9	91	1265	9	118
1226	9	91	1266	9	119
1227	9	93	1267	9	120
1228	9	94	1268	9	120
1229	9	94	1269	9	120
1230	9	95	1270	9	121
1231	9	96	1271	9	123
1232	9	97	1271	9	127
1233	9	97	1273	9	129
1234	9	98	1274	10	3
1235	9	99	1275	10	3
1236	9	99	1276	10	4
1237	9	99	1277	10	5
1238	9	99	1278	10	6
1239	9	100	1279	10	10
1240	9	102	1280	10	11

Figure 2. An image from Rashad Khalifa's book (1982) on the computational method for counting Allah in Surah al-Tawbah.

List of Chapters & Verses containing the word 'Allah ﷻ'					
NO.	CHAPTER	VERSE	NO.	CHAPTER	VERSE
2401	49	17	2441	57	25
2402	49	18	2442	57	25
2403	49	19	2443	57	27
2404	50	26	2444	57	28
2405	51	50	2445	57	28
2406	51	51	2446	57	29
2407	51	59	2447	57	29
2408	52	27	2448	57	29
2409	52	43	2449	58	1
2410	52	43	2450	58	1
2411	53	23	2451	58	1
2412	53	25	2452	58	1
2413	53	26	2453	58	2
2414	53	31	2454	58	3
2415	53	38	2455	58	4
2416	53	62	2456	58	4
2417	57	1	2457	58	4
2418	57	4	2458	58	5

Figure 3. An image from Rashad Khalifa's book (1982) on the computational method for counting Allah in Surah al-Mujādalah.

2301	46	13
2302	46	17
2303	46	17
2304	46	21
2305	46	23
2306	46	23
2307	46	26
2308	46	28
2309	46	31
2310	46	32
2311	47	1
2312	47	3

Figure 4. An image from Rashad Khalifa's book (1982) on the computational method for counting Allah in Surah al-Ahqāf.

### 6.17. Claim 17

The third word in the opening phrase, *al-rahmān*, appears 57 times in the Qur'an, which is a multiple of 19. The total repetition of the word *al-rahmān* (157 times), *bil-rahmān* (3 times) and *lil-rahmān* (9 times) is 169, and subtracting the 112 occurrences of *al-rahmān* in *Basmalah* gives 57.

**Evaluation:** Excluding the phrase *Basmalah* at the beginning of the Surahs (except for Surah al-Fātiḥah), the calculations are correct, and this word is the only one in the phrase *Basmalah*, whose repetition in the Qur'an is a multiple of 19 without manipulation. However, on its own, it cannot be considered a non-human feature.

### 6.18. Claim 18

The fourth word in the opening phrase, *al-rahīm*, appears 114 times in the Qur'an, which is a multiple of 19. The total repetition of the word *al-rahīm* (146 times) and *rahīm* (81 times) is 227, subtracting the 112

occurrences of *Basmalah* results in 115. Since Khalifa considers verses 128 and 129 of Surah al-Tawbah to be interpolations and not part of the divine revelation, he does not count *rahīm* in Q. 9:128. Excluding this word from the total repetition makes Khalifa's total (114) correct. Some scholars argue that the reason for not counting is that *rahīm* in this verse is an attribute of the Prophet not *Allah*. However, according to Khalifa's criteria, the last two verses of this Surah are interpolations (Alavi 2007).

**Evaluation:** The claim of interpolation in the Qur'an, especially in two verses that no one has previously claimed to be interpolations, seems unfounded. Moreover, the argument that *rahīm* was not counted because it is not an attribute of Allah in this verse does not seem valid. This is because, firstly, Khalifa did not make this argument, and secondly, with regard to counting the repetitions of the word *ism*, the uses of this word for others than Allah, such as Yaḥyā and Jesus, were counted.

### 6.19. Claim 19

The total of the multiples of 19 related to the repetition of the words in the opening phrase of the Qur'an, *Basmalah*, is 152, which itself is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** Khalifa's calculations in counting the repetition of these words are incorrect, so the claim based on these calculations is also incorrect.

### 6.20. Claim 20

The number of repetitions of each word in *Basmalah* according to the Abjad numerology corresponds to a specific name of God. After calculating the Abjad values of all the names of God in the Qur'an, it was revealed that only four names are multiples of 19, which are related to the words in *Basmalah*:

- The first word *bism* appears 19 times in the Qur'an, corresponding to the name *Wāḥid* whose Abjad value is 19.
- The second word *Allah* appears 2698 times in the Qur'an, corresponding to the name *dhū al-faḍl al-‘azīm* whose Abjad value is 2698.
- The third word *al-rahmān* appears 57 times in the Qur'an, corresponding to the name *Majīd* whose Abjad value is 57.
- The fourth word *al-rahīm* appears 114 times in the Qur'an,



corresponding to the name *Jāmi* ' whose Abjad value is 114.

**Evaluation:** Firstly, Abjad numerology is not related to the Qur'an. Secondly, Khalifa claimed that only four names of God in the Qur'an have Abjad values that are multiples of 19, while the Abjad values of the names *Arḥam al-rāḥimīn* (589) and *Khayr al-fāṣilīn* (1102) are also multiples of 19. Thirdly, if we use the Uthmanic script, the Abjad value of the word *Wāḥid* is 18 and not a multiple of 19.

### 6.21. Claim 21

The Qur'an contains 114 Surahs, and in the ninth Surah, *Basmalah* is absent. However, this omission is compensated in Q. 27:30, thus making the total occurrences of the opening phrase in the Qur'an 114, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** This claim is correct in its calculations but does not imply any non-human characteristic. It should be noted that in Khalifa's claims, the occurrences of *Basmalah* at the beginning of Surahs (except Surah al-Fātiḥah) are selectively counted. In some cases, they are included, and in others, they are not, which undermines the generality of his claims.

### 6.22. Claim 22

Between the beginning of the ninth Surah (where *Basmalah* is not mentioned) and the additional *Basmalah* in Surah 27, there are 19 Surahs.

**Evaluation:** There are 17 or at most 18 Surahs between these Surahs, and one should not count both the starting and ending Surahs when calculating the interval. However, if it is said that from the point where *Basmalah* is absent to where the additional *Basmalah* appears (in Surah al-Naml), there are 19 Surahs mentioned, it would be acceptable, although it would not count as the interval between Surahs and would not fully account for Surah al-Naml.

### 6.23. Claim 23

The 50th Surah is named Qāf, which starts with the disjointed letter *qāf*. According to our calculation, the letter *qāf* appears 57 times in this Surah, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** Although his calculations are correct, this alone cannot prove numerical miracle since such a pattern could be intentionally designed and is not beyond human capability.

### 6.24. Claim 24

The only other Surah that begins with the disjointed letter *qāf* is Surah 42 (al-Shūrā). The letter *qāf* also appears 57 times in this Surah, which is a multiple of 19. An interesting point is that despite the length of Surah al-Shūrā being nearly twice that of Surah Qāf, the number of occurrences of the letter *qāf* in both Surahs is exactly 57.

**Evaluation:** The critique of Claim 23 applies here as well.

### 6.25. Claim 25

According to the opening verse of Surah 50, the letter *qāf* is the first letter of the word Qur'an. The total occurrences of this letter in the two Surahs containing the disjointed letter *qāf* equal the number of Surahs in the Qur'an, which is 114, a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** This claim has two parts: the total occurrences of the letter *qāf* in these two Surahs is 114, and this number (114) is a multiple of 19. In critique, it is noted that while the number 114 is the count of Surahs in the Qur'an, for Khalifa, its multiple of 19 is significant. However, when two numbers are multiples of 19, it is obvious that their sum is also a multiple of 19, and this does not constitute a new claim (different from Claims 23 and 24). Additionally, this type of reasoning is not commonly presented in Khalifa's other claims and lacks generality.

### 6.26. Claim 26

In the opening verse of Surah Qāf, the Qur'an is described as *majīd*, whose Abjad value equals 57, the same as the number of occurrences of *qāf* in the Surahs with the disjointed letter *qāf*.

**Evaluation:** Besides the lack of connection between Abjad letters and the Qur'an, in the beginning of Surah Ṣād, the Qur'an is also described as *dhī al-dhikr*, and neither the letter *ṣād* nor the Abjad value of *dhī al-dhikr* is a multiple of 19 or equal to each other. Hence, this claim is subjective and lacks generality.

### 6.27. Claim 27

Example: The people who did not believe in Lūt are called *qawm* throughout the Qur'an, except in Surah 50, Qāf, where they are called *ikhwān*. It is clear that if they were called *qawm* like in other places, it would

have affected the count of the letter *qāf* in this Surah. Other examples: The letter *ṣād* in Surah Ṣād (Q. 38:13) and the word *Bakkah* instead of *Makkah* in Surah Āli 'Imrān (Q. 3:96), which begins with the disjointed letter *mīm*.

**Evaluation:** Although this claim is correct in its calculations and reasoning, similar numerical patterns do not exist in the other instances mentioned (in Surah Ṣād and Surah Āli 'Imrān). Thus, this claim also lacks generality to establish numerical miracles.

- The similar claim about the word *aṣḥāb* in Surah Ṣād is not correct. The letter *ṣād* appears 29 times in this Surah.
- The similar claim about the word *Bakkah* in the third Surah is also not correct. The letter *mīm* counts to 1249 with the *Basmalah*, and 1245 without counting it in the *Basmalah*, neither of which is a multiple of 19.

### 6.28. Claim 28

Surah 68 begins with the letter *nūn* and contains 133 *nūns*, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** According to the Uthmanic script, the letter *N* is counted as one letter in the first verse, but in Khalifa's book, it is written as *nūn* and counted as two letters. As previously mentioned, Khalifa's calculations are based on the Uthmanic script. If the disjointed letters are to be counted based on their pronunciation and not the script, then the other calculations should also follow this method. For example, in the disjointed letters *ḤM*, the phrase *ḥām mīm* should be considered, and the letter *mīm* should be counted three times. Therefore, in this case, the calculations are not only incorrect, but it also strengthens the suspicion of striving to achieve the number 19 at any cost.

### 6.29. Claim 29

The disjointed letter *ṣād* appears in three Surahs, al-A'rāf, Maryam and Ṣād, with a total occurrence of 152, a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** Although the numbers mentioned are correct in terms of calculations, the question arises as to why, unlike the letter *qāf* in Surahs Qāf and al-Shūrā, which were individually calculated and were multiples of 19, this was not done here. This inconsistency undermines the generality of the claim.

### 6.30. Claim 30

Surah 36 of the Qur'an named Yāsīn, begins with the two disjointed letters *yā* and *sīn*. The total occurrences of these two letters in this Surah is 285, which is 19 multiples.

**Evaluation:** Here, Khalifa has counted the occurrences of *yā* and *sīn* in the *Basmalah* as well, contrary to his own criteria. Even ignoring this issue, he calculated the total occurrences of *yā* and *sīn* in Surah Yāsīn, whereas in Surah al-Shūrā, only *qāf* was counted, and the calculations for other disjointed letters *hā mīm 'ayn sīn qāf* were not considered as a total. This inconsistency indicates the subjective and unregulated nature of these claims.

### 6.31. Claim 31

Seven Surahs begin with the disjointed letters *hā* and *mīm*, which are Surahs 40 to 46. The total occurrences of these two letters in these seven Surahs is 2147, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** A similar critique to Claim 30 applies here.

### 6.32. Claim 32

The seven Surahs that begin with the disjointed letters *hā mīm* are divided into two groups by the phrase *'ayn sīn qāf* in Q. 42:2, with the occurrences of *hā* and *mīm* in both parts being multiples of 19.

**Evaluation:** According to Khalifa's calculations for counting the letters *hā* and *mīm* in these seven Surahs, his claim in this regard is incorrect. Based on his claim, Surahs Ghāfir, Fuṣṣilat, and the first verse of Surah al-Shūrā fall into one group. Counting the disjointed letters *hā* and *mīm* in the first part results in 775, which is not a multiple of 19. The second group includes the third verse of Surah al-Shūrā onwards and Surahs al-Zukhruf, al-Dukhān, al-Jāthīyah, and al-Aḥqāf. Counting the disjointed letters *hā mīm* in the second part results in 1372, which is also not a multiple of 19. Moreover, the critique of complex relationships and lack of generality applies here as well.

### 6.33. Claim 33

The total occurrences of the letters *hā* and *mīm* in the previous Surah (Q. 41), the subsequent Surah (Q. 43), and Surah 42, which contains the dividing

phrase *'ayn sīn qāf*, is 1045, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** The critique of this claim is related to the previous claim. If the number of *ḥā mīm* is examined according to Khalifa's claim, it must be said that the number of *ḥā* and *mīm* in Surah Fuṣṣilat, including the *ḥā* in the *Basmalah* of this Surah and *ḥā mīm* in the first verse, equals 327, which is not a multiple of 19. In the second part of the claim, the total occurrences of *ḥā mīm* in Q. 43 is 368, and from the third verse onwards, it is 350, totaling 718, which is not a multiple of 19.

### 6.34. Claim 34

The total occurrences of the letters *ḥā* and *mīm* in the three subsequent Surahs (i.e., Q. 44-46) along with the first Surah of this category (Q. 40) is 1102, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** In this claim, regardless of the accuracy of the calculations, the subjective and unregulated nature is evident.

### 6.35. Claim 35

The disjointed letters *'ayn sīn qāf* appear in Surah 42, and the total occurrences of these letters in this Surah is 209, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** In this claim, apart from the issue of considering the letters in the *Basmalah* in the calculation, excluding the phrase *ḥā mīm* from the disjointed letters of this Surah further shows the lack of generality in the claim and the effort to achieve the number 19 at any cost.

### 6.36. Claim 36

The 19th Surah, named Maryam, contains five disjointed letters *kāf ḥā yā 'ayn ṣād*, with a total occurrence of these 5 letters in this Surah being 798, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** Aside from the accuracy in counting the letters and considering the *Basmalah* in this count, the lack of generality in this claim is evident, as there is no consistent method for counting the disjointed letters in Surahs containing these letters. Those with a total occurrence that is a multiple of 19 are presented, while others that do not have this feature are not mentioned.

### 6.37. Claim 37

There is an intricate relationship among the disjointed letters *hā*, *ṭā hā*, *ṭā sīn*, and *ṭā sīn mīm* in Surahs 19, 20, 26, 27, and 28, such that the total occurrences of these letters in these 5 Surahs is 1767, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** Here too, since the occurrences of the disjointed letters in these Surahs do not individually become multiples of 19 in any way, their total count reaches a multiple of 19 in a very unregulated and subjective manner.

### 6.38. Claim 38

The total frequency of the letters *alif*, *lām* and *mīm* in Q. 2 is 9899, which is a multiple of 19.

### 6.39. Claim 39

The total frequency of the letters *alif*, *lām* and *mīm* in Q. 3 is 5662, which is a multiple of 19.

### 6.40. Claim 40

The total frequency of the letters *alif*, *lām* and *mīm* in Q. 29 is 1672, which is a multiple of 19.

### 6.41. Claim 41

The total frequency of the letters *alif*, *lām* and *mīm* in Q. 30 is 1254, which is a multiple of 19.

### 6.42. Claim 42

The total frequency of the letters *alif*, *lām* and *mīm* I Q. 31 is 817, which is a multiple of 19.

### 6.43. Claim 43

The total frequency of the letters *alif*, *lām* and *mīm* in Q. 32 is 570, which is a multiple of 19.

#### 6.44. Claim 44

The total frequency of the letters *alif, lām and rā* in Q. 10 is 2489, which is a multiple of 19.

#### 6.45. Claim 45

The total frequency of the letters *alif, lām and rā* in Q. 11 is 2489, which is a multiple of 19. The claim is written incorrectly.

#### 6.46. Claim 46

The total frequency of the letters *alif, lām and rā* in Q. 12 is 2375, which is a multiple of 19.

#### 6.47. Claim 47

The total frequency of the letters *alif, lām and rā* in Q. 14 is 1197, which is a multiple of 19.

#### 6.48. Claim 48

The total frequency of the letters *alif, lām and rā* in Q. 15 is 912, which is a multiple of 19.

#### 6.49. Claim 49

The total frequency of the letters *alif, lām, mīm and rā* in Q. 13 is 1482, which is a multiple of 19.

#### 6.50. Claim 50

The total frequency of the letters *alif, lām, mīm and šād* in Q. 7 is 5320, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** From Claim 38 to 50, disregarding some inaccuracies in calculating certain letters (e.g., the letter *lām* in Q. 11 and the letter *šād* in Q. 7), the issue mentioned in Claim 36 still applies. Although the repetition of these letters in these Surahs being multiples of 19 does not constitute a numerical miracle due to its lack of generality across all Surahs containing disjointed letters, if more precise calculations were performed, the

improbability of such a coincidence would be significant.

### 6.51. Claim 51

The number of distinct letters in the disjointed letters of the Qur'an is 14, and there are 14 different combinations of these letters used as disjointed letters in the Qur'an. Additionally, the number of Surahs that begin with disjointed letters is 29. Summing these three numbers gives us 57, which is a multiple of 19.

**Evaluation:** Although the sum of these three numbers equals 57 and is a multiple of 19, the reason for selecting these three numbers is unclear and seems arbitrary. For example, one could also include the total number of disjointed letters (considering repetitions) or sum the Surah numbers that contain disjointed letters and add them to this set. In any case, the criterion for why these three numbers should be summed together is not explicitly stated.

### 6.52. Claim 52

The Qur'an teaches us that the disjointed letters are a miracle of the Qur'an. This is stated in verses Q. 10:1, 12:1, 13:1, 15:1, 26:2, 27:1, 28:2, and 31:2. The phrase, these are the miracles of this book, is mentioned only in connection with the disjointed letters.

**Evaluation:** Critically, one can argue that firstly, the phrase *āyāt al-kitāb* does not necessarily mean the miracles of the book, and many interpretations exist for it. Secondly, even if this statement is true, it does not demonstrate that there is a mathematical and numerical pattern in the disjointed letters; it merely suggests that these letters are considered signs and miracles. Thirdly, this claim is not considered numerical or mathematical.

## 7. Conclusion

In this study, after defining the criteria for achieving a numerical miracle in the Qur'an or any other text, the claims of one of the most important figures in the establishment of numerical miracles were fully evaluated, and it was determined that his claims generally lack the necessary conditions for a numerical miracle in the Qur'an. Rashad Khalifa's 52 claims regarding the numerical miracle of the Qur'an were evaluated from the perspectives of the accuracy of calculations and compliance with the four necessary conditions of a numerical miracle. Although a consistent method was not always used in the calculations, the majority of the claims did not have issues with



numerical accuracy. Khalifa's claims can be divided into five sections:

1. The relationship of the disjointed letters with the number 19 (29 claims).
2. The relationship of the occasions of revelation with the number of Qur'anic letters and words as multiples of 19 (11 claims).
3. Use of the Abjad letters to show the connection of the Qur'an with the number 19 (2 claims).
4. Miscellaneous, including counting Surahs, words, and letters in the Qur'an and their connection to the number 19 (9 claims).
5. Non-numerical (1 claim).

The evaluation of the claims, disregarding those with incorrect calculations or based on false premises, can be summarized in seven sections:

1. Claims that are not directly related to the Qur'an and whose proof depends on the accuracy of secondary claims, such as the occasions of revelation (12 cases).
2. Claims that, even with accurate calculations, lack non-human and extraordinary characteristics (5 cases).
3. Claims that are arbitrary and lack generality, sometimes using multiple standards for calculations (27 cases).
4. Claims that are complex and do not follow specific rules and logic (2 cases).
5. Claims whose accuracy depends on the exclusion of some verses from the Qur'anic text (5 cases).
6. A claim that is mathematically obvious and not an independent claim (1 case).
7. A claim that is not numerical and mathematical, but interpretative and arbitrary, without involving calculations (1 case).

It is noteworthy that both the selection of the number 19 by Rashad Khalifa is considered a significant innovation and that the correct claims indicate the possibility of intentional connections around the number 19 in the Qur'an by Allah. However, it is evident that this paper does not aim to negate the numerical and mathematical miracle of the Qur'an per se, but rather, assuming the conditions for achieving it, accepts numerical miracles as one aspect of the miraculous nature of the Qur'an and opens a way to evaluate other works written on the mathematical pattern of the Qur'an.

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